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1611 c. 157.

LECTURES

ON

THE FOUR LAST BOOKS

OF THE

PENTATEUCH;

DESIGNED TO SHOW THE

DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE JEWISH RELIGION,

CHIEFLY FROM INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

In Three Parts.

I. The Authenticity and Truth of the History.
II. The Theological, Moral and Political Principles of the Jewish Law.
III. Review of the Effects of Judaism, as preparatory to Christianity.

DELIVERED

IN THE CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,

AT THE

LECTURE ESTABLISHED BY THE PROVOST AND SENIOR FELLOWS, UNDER THE WILL OF MRS. ANNE DONNELLAN.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD GRAVES, D.D. M.R.I.A.

DEAN OF ARDAGH,

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EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTRY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

"Whereas a Legacy of One thousand two hundred and forty-three Pounds, has been bequeathed to the College of Dublin, by Mrs. ANNE DONNELLAN, for the encouragement of Religion, Learning, and good Manners; the particular mode of application being entrusted to the Provost and Senior Fellows:—

"RESOLVED,

"I. That a Divinity Lecture, to which shall be annexed a Salary, arising from the interest of One thousand two hundred Pounds, shall be established for ever, to be called *Donnellan's Lecture.*

"II. That the Lecturer shall be forthwith elected from among the Fellows of said College, and hereafter annually on the 20th of November.

"III. That the subject or subjects of the Lectures shall be determined at the time of election by the Board, to be treated of in six Sermons, which shall be delivered in the College Chapel, after morning service, on certain Sundays, to be appointed on the 20th of November next, after the election of the Lecturer, and within a year from said appointment.

"IV. That one moiety of the Interest of the said £1,200 shall be paid to the Lecturer, as soon as he shall have delivered the whole number of Lectures; and the other moiety as soon as he shall have published four of the said Lectures—one copy to be deposited in the Library of the College, one in the Library of Armagh, one in the Library of St. Sepulchre, one to be given to the Chancellor of the University, and one to the Provost of the College."

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the Friends of Irreligion and Anarchy in this country, some years ago, disseminated with a malignant industry the First Part of Mr. Paine's "Age of Reason," containing a bold and virulent attack on the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the Heads of the University of Dublin judged that it might be expedient to direct the attention of the Students to the clear and convincing evidence by which this part of Revelation is sustained; on that occasion, the Subject of the following LECTURES was selected for the ensuing year, when it was my duty to deliver them. But before that period arrived, so many able and satisfactory answers * appeared to Mr. Paine's pamphlet; and the extreme ignorance of its author, the futility of his reasonings, and the grossness of his misrepresentations, were so clearly exposed; that I judged it unnecessary to conduct my researches or form my arguments with any particular reference to the objections urged in that tract, and determined on taking a wider range, and entering into a more radical discussion of *the* divine original of the Jewish Scheme, than I had at first designed; and for that purpose I resolved to examine the *four last* books of the Pentateuch with all the attention in my power, and discover how far they carried *internal* evidence of their genuineness and truth, in the detail both of the common and the miraculous events. The following work is the effect of that determination.

* Amongst these, the excellent Apology of Bishop Watson undoubtedly ranks the first;—and in this country, the Rev. Mr. Hincks, of Cork, produced a very useful compilation on the same subject;—and Dr. Stokes, of Trinity College, Dublin, published a brief but able answer to Mr. Paine, which was circulated with excellent effect amongst the Students.

The Friends of Religion will, I trust, receive this attempt to explain and defend a part of Revelation most frequently assailed by infidels,* with candour and indulgence. I am deeply sensible of the importance of the subject, and would not have presumed to enter upon it, had I found it already preoccupied by any writer of established reputation; but it appeared to me that all, or very nearly all the distinguished authors, whose labours have been employed in illustrating the Old Testament in particular, or stating the proofs of Revelation in general, have been in some degree led away from bestowing on this subject that continued attention which its importance deserved, and combining the various characters of truth incidentally dispersed through the writings of the great Jewish Legislator, in *one distinct view*, in which each would communicate new lustre to the rest. Such authors as have illustrated the Scriptures with continued commentaries, were, by the very nature of their undertaking, prevented from uniting in one view the many important observations and proofs which the separate parts of the sacred text suggested. Those who were employed in refuting the objections of any one particular antagonist, were almost inevitably led to magnify these objections beyond their relative importance in any general consideration of the subject. The same writers also frequently were induced to employ their attention almost exclusively on such passages as seemed obscure or objectionable, and pass with less distinct notice the clear and direct arguments and proofs, which were to be derived from those parts of the sacred history which scepticism itself could scarcely venture to attack;—thus suffering the adversary of revealed truth to lead its advocate from the strongest to the weakest ground, and prevent him from employing those topics which would operate most powerfully on every candid and unprejudiced mind. Works

* That infidels or sceptics still direct their chief attacks against the Old Testament, is daily experienced.—The reader will see some very recent instances, in the publications of the late Rev. Dr. Geddes, and of Mr. De Watte, noticed in the APPENDIX.

constructed entirely on this plan have sometimes a most pernicious effect on the young, the uninformed, and the wavering; they lead them to consider Revelation as consisting chiefly of obscurities, and founded chiefly on questionable facts: while on the contrary, the great truths it establishes are as clear and intelligible as they are important; and the series of proofs on which it rests, when viewed in their natural order, are so firmly connected and plainly conclusive, that, if considered with attention and candour, they carry with them the fullest conviction; and when contrasted with the improbabilities which must be credited without proof, and the wild conjectures which must be admitted as certain, by those who reject all supernatural interposition in the history of religion, render it evident that *blind credulity* * is much more imputable to those who *believe* the sacred history to be *false*, than those who admit it to be true, and that sound reason and philosophy, far from being opposed to religious faith, in reality coalesce with and support it.

In what I have now said, I beg that I may not be misunderstood; as if I undervalued the labours of those Writers who have stepped forward with such manly and pious zeal, to repel the assailants of Revelation. No, their exertions have been most praiseworthy and useful; they have shewn that the most obscure parts of Scripture admit a fair and natural explanation, and that the most plausible objections to it are founded on misconception and mistake; they have exposed in the strongest colours the disingenuousness and the unreasonableness of infidel writers, and in various important particulars have illustrated many truths of Revelation with great clearness, and strengthened its evidence by new proofs. I only mean to say, that works entirely or chiefly controversial are not the best calculated for impressing conviction on the yet wavering mind of youth, or conveying that information which is most necessary to the

* Vide for some instances of this, the Appendix, Sect. II. in the review of the manner in which Dr. Geddes attempts to account for the Mosaic Miracles.

uninstructed; they rather prepare the way for, and facilitate the labours of, the direct and general advocate for the truth of Revelation, than preoccupy his office or supersede the necessity of his exertions.

It was on this view I undertook, and with these feelings I composed, the following Treatise. In that part of it which is entitled a *Review of the chief Effects of Judaism, as connected with and preparatory to Christianity*, I hope it will be found that I have endeavoured to attend to the principles I have now stated, and to combine the answer to each objection with the statement of the positive evidence for the truth of the facts, or the reasonableness of the principles, objected to, in such a manner as may prevent this Work from having any tendency to perplex the minds or unsettle the faith of that class of Students to whom the different parts of it were separately addressed, and to whom it is my most ardent wish and humble prayer that it may now be useful.

If it be asked why I have *separated* the evidences of Judaism from those of Christianity? I answer, not only because the admirable works of many eminent writers, particularly of Archdeacon PALEY,* had already exhibited the distinct evidence of the Gospel history in the clearest view, but because I conceive the combination of these two subjects in most preceding works in which the divine original of the Jewish Law has been defended, has in some measure prevented the distinct evidence for this part of Revelation from being as fully and clearly stated as it ought to be. Where the Law and the Gospel are at once in a writer's contemplation, the immediate and as it were practical importance of the latter must appear so much greater than that of the former, that it is natural this should engross almost the whole of his attention. Besides, the proofs and principles of the Mosaic Law are so distinct from those of the Gospel,

* In his *Evidences of Christianity*, and his *Horæ Paulinæ*; which last I consider as one of the most original, most convincing, and most important illustrations of the truth of the Gospel History, ever published.

and the period of human history with which they are connected so different, that it is not easy to combine them in one system of reasoning with clearness and effect. At the same time I am fully sensible of the inseparable connexion between these two grand parts of the divine economy of grace, and that to represent either as independent of the other would be to misrepresent and undermine it. I hope it will be found that this principle has not been neglected in the following Work. *

If it be asked why I have exhibited the *internal* evidence of the Mosaic Law *separate* from the *external?* I answer, because I conceive it a completely distinct topic of argument, to which the external evidence is properly a supplement, which may be resorted to with much more advantage and effect when the internal has been first distinctly considered. Besides, the external testimonies for the truth of the Mosaic history have been lately examined and exhibited by many learned and able writers (particularly by Mr. FABER, in his Horæ Mosaicæ) so fully, that it would be as unnecessary as it would be arrogant to attempt to supersede their labours, when I can do my reader so much more service by simply referring to them. †

* Vide Part III. Lect. V. & VI.

† As this Work may come into the hands of some theological Students desirous to acquaint themselves with the external evidences for the truth of the Old Testament, I annex the following references to some of the chief authors who have treated of them.

JOSEPHUS, in his first book against Apion, quotes many testimonies to the antiquity of the Jewish nation; the circumstances attending their emigration rom Egypt, and the later periods of their history, from a number of authors then extant, and whom he appeals to as perfectly known, though only fragments of a few of their works now remain. He appeals also to the public records of the Tyrians, "which (he says) are kept with great exactness, and "include accounts of the facts done among them, and such as concern their "transactions with other nations also." These records state the building of the temple of Solomon, and the time it took place, and various circumstances connected with it.—Josephus also quotes Manætho, Dius the historian of Phœnicia, and Menander of Ephesus, to the same purpose. He also quotes Berosus the Chaldean, "well known (says he) by the learned, "on account of his publication of the Chaldean books of astronomy and "philosophy among the Greeks. This Berosus therefore, following the "most ancient records of that nation, gives us an *History of the Deluge of*

Some Friends whose judgment I most highly respect, have stated to me, that I ought to have included the book of Genesis in my plan; and that even now I ought to prefix some prelimi-

" *Waters* that then happened, and of the destruction of mankind thereby, and " agrees with Moses's narrative thereof; he also gives an *account of the Ark* " wherein Noah the origin of our race was preserved, when it was brought " down to the highest part of the Armenian mountains; after which he " gives a catalogue of the posterity of Noah, and adds the years of their " chronology, and at length comes down to Nabolassar (or Nabopolassar) " who was king of Babylon."—I earnestly recommend the entire Book to the perusal of the Student.

The concurrence of the Sacred Records with those of Pagan history, and the probable derivation of much of the ancient philosophy from the Scripture, is confirmed by EUSEBIUS in his *Præparatio Evangelica*, much more fully than by Josephus—a work of such signal importance that it may be useful to give an Abstract of its Contents, to excite the attention of the Student.—In his first book, Eusebius exhibits a view of the Theology of the Ancients, particularly of the Phœnicians and Egyptians, and of the progress of idolatry, and the ancient opinions on the origin of the universe; in his second book he carries on his view to the Theology of the Greeks and Romans, the fables of the heroic age, and the Arcana of the mysteries; and also introduces a brief exposition of the absurdities of this theology, and these superstitions. In his third, fourth, and fifth books, he exposes at large the absurdities of the fables and superstitions attending idolatry, especially the fallacy of its divinations and oracles; and though he intermixes opinions of his own in accounting for facts, which a more enlightened philosophy will not approve, yet the facts themselves, and the original authorities on which they are supported are most highly important. In his sixth book, he exposes the pagan system of fate, &c. In his seventh and eighth books, he illustrates the superiority of the Jewish religion, in its theology, its moral principles, and its effects. But in his ninth, he adduces what is most directly connected with the object of our present inquiry, an accumulation of testimonies from works then extant, but very many of which are now lost, to confirm the sacred history: he here produces the strongest testimonies of Grecian writers to the excellence of the Hebrew principles of theology and morals,* to the vain attempts of the Egyptian magicians in opposition to Moses,† Abydenus's tradition of the deluge,‡ and Tower of Babel,§ Eupolemus's testimony to the history of Abraham,‖ and various other confirmations of the Jewish history preserved by Alexander Polyhistor—from Theodotus, to the history of Jacob; from Artapanes, to that of Joseph and of Moses, and a long and accurate testimony to the plagues of Egypt and the passage of the Red Sea;¶ from the tragic poet Ezekiel, to the same facts; and Demetrius, to the same, in an abstract evidently taken from the sacred writings as

* In the first seven Chapters. † Cap. viii. ‡ Cap. xii. § Cap. xv.
‖ Cap. xvii. ¶ Cap. xxvii.

nary Lectures on this important part of Sacred History, before I submit this Work to the Public.—To them, I answer, that the history of the *four last* books of the Pentateuch forms *one* subject

unquestioned and certain records. I omit the testimonies to later facts in the Jewish history,—the entire book is peculiarly worth the Student's attention. In the tenth book, he adduces many facts and arguments to prove the philosophy of the Greeks was borrowed from the Barbarians, and illustrates the superiority of the Jewish theology. In his eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth books, Eusebius considers the system of Plato, and proves its agreement in a variety of particulars with that of the Jews, and its having been probably derived from that source; while at the same time he points out the degrading turpitude of Plato's moral theory in his Republic, and strongly contrasts it with the purity of the Mosaic code. The fourteenth and fifteenth books contain a view of the chief systems of philosophy among the Greeks, comparing them with the Jewish Law, and decidedly establishing the superiority of the latter. In a word, this great Work, though not entirely free from the prejudices and the errors prevalent at the period when its Author lived, yet exhibits a most important monument of the necessity and advantages both of the Jewish and Christian Revelations, the confirmation of the Sacred History by various records and authors extant at that period, though now in a great measure lost, and the probability that the Grecian philosophy derived its only just views, whether in theology or morals, from the lights of Revelation, though broken and obscured by the gross and impure mediums through which they were conveyed.

Amongst modern writers, STILLINGFLEET, in his *Origines Sacræ*, has with great learning and acuteness "proved the reconcileableness of the account "of times in Scripture with that of the learned and ancient heathen nations— "the consistency of the belief of the Scriptures with the principles of "reason—and that no clear account can be given of the origin of things, "from the principles of philosophy, without Scripture." In his sixth book, this learned Author has proved the uncertainty of ancient history, as opposed to the Scripture accounts:—in Book iii. chap. 4. he has confirmed the Scripture accounts of the *Creation*, the *Deluge*, and the *peopling of the world*, by the testimonies of Heathen tradition and Heathen history: and in Book v. he has traced the origin of Heathen mythology to the corruption of the Scripture accounts.

GALE, in his *Court of the Gentiles*, has traced the original of human literature, both philologic and philosophic, from the Scriptures and the Jewish Church, with a great variety of argument, and a great extent of erudition. Vide his First Part, as to the traduction of the Pagan literature and mythology from the Jews; and his second, as to the original of philosophy: in this work, the zeal for carrying his system to a great extent has perhaps led this learned Author too far, but unquestionably he has collected a body of most important evidence, which establishes the truth of the Scripture History.

perfectly distinct from the history of the book of Genesis, except so far as it is connected with the account of the fall of man in the grand economy of grace. The evidence of the divine

BOCHART'S *Phaleg*, tracing the dispersion of mankind; and BRYANT'S *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*; confirm this coincidence. But the Works of Bochart and Bryant are perhaps too voluminous and learned for the generality of students: They will find the testimonies of antiquity to the truth of the Scriptures clearly but briefly exhibited, by GROTIUS, in his Truth of the Christian Religion, with Le Clerc's valuable notes—by ALLIX, in his Reflections on Genesis xix. & xx. and on the Historical and Prophetical Books, Chap. ii. a work included in Watson's Tracts—by the BISHOP of LINCOLN, in his Elements of Christian Theology, Part I. chap. i.—and especially by the learned Mr. FABER, in his *Horæ Mosaicæ*, Book I. Sect. 1. to whose work I refer, as superseding the necessity of my entering any further into this subject.

It may not be inexpedient to observe here, that another topic from which the authority and credibility of the Pentateuch, and indeed of the entire Old Testament, derives great confirmation, is the *agreement of the manners and customs of the East*, as they *incidentally* appear in the *Sacred Records*, with the manners and customs which history proves prevailed in the East at the period when the events related in Scripture took place; and from the great illustration which the Scriptures have received, by comparing them with the observations of modern travellers, on the productions, the manners, and the feelings prevalent in the East at this day; where, from the peculiar stability of established manners and customs, clear vestiges still remain of that state of society which the Scriptures describe: On this subject, I refer to HARMER'S *Observations on Scripture*, which have been judiciously added to, improved and applied, by Mr. BURDER, in his *Oriental Customs applied to illustrate the Scriptures*.

I will conclude this already too long, but I hope not useless note, by referring the Student desirous at once of extending his knowledge, and confirming his faith, to the Rev. Mr. MAURICE'S *History of Hindostan*, and to the accomplished Sir WILLIAM JONES'S Researches into the History and Antiquities of Asia, and those of his learned Colleagues; where he will find multiplied confirmations of the truth of the Scripture history, derived from the most unsuspected sources, and delivered with the greatest clearness and candour.

To limit his search, I would direct the student particularly to consult Mr. Maurice's History, Vol. I. chap. i. where he points out the striking circumstances of similarity between the Hindoo, the Hebraic, the Phœnician, the Egyptian, and the Grecian systems of cosmogony; as in their account of the incumbent wind or spirit agitating the abyss—of water, being the primæval element, &c. I would also refer to his second chapter, which shews that the Indian claims to antiquity are fallacious, and cannot be opposed to the Mosaic history and the Hebrew chronology: to his tenth chapter, in

original of the Mosaic Law may therefore be clearly exhibited, without including the consideration of the facts recorded in the book of Genesis—I add, that in the natural order of reasoning,

which he concludes his learned and laborious investigation into the history of astronomy, and proves that the result of the whole survey, so far from subverting, gives a decided support to the Mosaic records. In the eleventh chapter, we find the Mosaic history of *Adam* and the *fall* confirmed by the Indian records and traditions—in the twelfth, the Mosaic account of the *antediluvians* receives similar illustration; and in the thirteenth, the history of the *deluge* receives the most full, and I had almost said irresistible confirmation. In Vol. II. Book ii. chap. ii. the Student will find many solid arguments to prove that ancient Sanscreet writings corroborate the Mosaic records; and in Book iv. he will find it, I think, irrefutably established, that "immemorial traditions diffused over all the East, and derived from a "patriarchal source, concerning the fall of man, the original promise, and a "future Mediator, had taught the whole Gentile world to expect the appear-"ance of a sacred and illustrious personage about the time of Christ's advent." Here also the opinions I have ventured to advance concerning Zoroaster and the Magi,* are illustrated and confirmed; and the similitude between the life and conduct of the Messiah and of Creeshna, the great Indian preserver, described and accounted for. And in the 5th chap. of the same book will be found ancient predictions traditionally preserved, respecting the day of judgment, and the destruction of the world by fire.

From the ASIATIC RESEARCHES I will point out some testimonies to the truths of the Sacred History, most directly connected with the subject of this work.—In the first volume, p. 229, we find a dissertation on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India, in which Sir William gives his reasons for believing that "the fable of the life of Saturn was raised on the true history "of Noah, and translated from the Bhagavat. The history of Menu or Sa-"tyavrata, an Indian king of divine birth, eminent for his piety and bene-"ficence, whose story seems evidently to be that of Noah disguised by Asiatic "fiction, and of whom we may safely offer a conjecture that he was the same "as Saturn."

On this epitome of the first Indian history which is now extant, Sir William Jones remarks: "it appears to me very curious and important; for the "story, though whimsically dressed up in the form of an allegory, seems to "prove a primæval tradition in this country, of the deluge described by "Moses, and consequently fixes the time when the genuine Hindoo chrono-"logy actually begins."

In page 244, Sir William tells us, "that water was the primitive element "and first work of the creative power, is the uniform opinion of the Indian "philosophers; but as they give so particular an account of the general "deluge, and of the creation, it can never be admitted that their whole sys-"tem arose from traditions concerning the flood alone; and it must appear

* Vide Infra.

the divine mission of Moses should be proved by its peculiar evidence, *before* the truth of the antecedent facts can be decidedly admitted, because the credibility of the facts recorded in

" indubitable that their doctrine is in part borrowed from the opening of " *Beresith* or Genesis, than which a more sublime passage from the first " word to the last never flowed or will flow from any human pen—' In the " beginning God created the earth, and the earth was void and waste, and " darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon " the face of the waters; and God said, Let light be, and light was.'—The " sublimity of this passage is considerably diminished by the Indian para- " phrase with which Menu, the son of Brama, begins his address to the sages " who consulted him on the formation of the universe:

" This world (says he) was all darkness undescribable, undistinguishable, " altogether as in profound sleep, till the self-existent irresistible God, mak- " ing it manifest with five elements and other glorious forms, perfectly dis- " pelled the gloom: he desiring to raise up various creatures by an emanation " from his own glory, first created the waters and impressed them with a " power of motion—by that power was produced a golden egg, blazing like " a thousand suns, in which was born BRAHMA, self-existing, the great pa- " rent of all rational beings. The waters are called Nara, since they are the " offspring of Nera or Iwara, and thence was *Narayana* named, because his " first *ayana* or moving was upon them. That which is the invisible cause " eternal, self-existing but unperceived, becoming masculine from neuter, is " celebrated among all creatures by the name of *Brahma*; that God having " dwelled in the egg through revolving years, himself meditating on himself, " divided it into two equal parts, and from these halves formed the heavens " and the earth, placing in the midst the subtle ether, the eight points of the " world, and the permanent receptacle of waters."

" To this curious description with which the Manaya Sastra begins, I can- " not refrain (says Sir William) from subjoining the four first verses of the " *Bhagavat*, and which are believed to have been pronounced by the " Supreme Being to Brahma. The following version is most scrupulously " literal:

' Even I was at first, not any other thing, that which exists, unperceived, ' supreme; afterwards *I am that which is*, and he who must remain am I.

' Except the first cause, whatever may appear and may not appear in ' the mind, know that to be to the mind, *máyá*, (or delusion) as light to ' darkness.

' As the great elements are in various beings, entering yet not entering, ' (that is, pervading, not destroying) thus am I in them, yet not in them.

' Even thus far may enquiry be made by him who seeks to know the ' principle of mind in union and separation, *which must be every where, always.*'

" Wild and obscure (says Sir William) as these ancient verses must appear " in a naked verbal translation, it will perhaps be thought by many, that the

this history must always chiefly rest on the authority of their inspired Historian, which I have here endeavoured to establish —I trust therefore this Work will be found one distinct and unmutilated system, embracing the full extent of the subject it professes to discuss.

I will however candidly confess, the great cause why I have not attempted to comply with the suggestions of my very respectable but certainly partial friends, is my inability to do so. The work they prescribe is on a subject of great importance and

"poetry or mythology of Greece and Italy afford no conceptions more awfully "magnificent; yet the beauty and simplicity of the Mosaic diction are un- "equalled."

I may be permitted to add, that these verses seem to have been composed by some one acquainted with the character in which Jehovah describes himself to the Jewish Lawgiver, *I am that I am—I am* hath sent you.

At the close of this most interesting dissertation, Sir William Jones remarks: "I am persuaded that a *connexion subsisted* between the old idola- "trous nations of *Egypt, India, Greece, and Italy*, long *before* they emi- "grated to their respective settlements, and consequently before the birth of "Moses;—but the truth of this proposition will in no degree affect the truth "and sanctity of the Mosaic history; which, if confirmation were wanted, "it would rather serve to confirm.

"The *Divine Legate*, educated by the daughter of a king, and in "all respects highly accomplished, could not but know the mythological "system of Egypt; but he might have condemned the superstitions of "that people, and despised the speculative absurdities of their priests, "though some of their traditions concerning the creation and the flood "were grounded on truth. Who was better acquainted with the mytho- "logy of Athens than Socrates? who more accurately versed in the "Rabbinical doctrines than Paul? who possessed clearer ideas of all ancient "astronomic systems than Newton? in whom could the Romish Church "have had a more formidable opponent than Chillingworth, whose deep "knowledge of its tenets rendered him so competent to dispute them? in a "word, who more exactly knew the abominable rites and shocking idolatries "of Canaan, than Moses himself?—yet the learning of these great men "only incited them to seek other sources of truth, piety, and virtue, than "those in which they had long been immersed. There is no shadow then "of foundation for an opinion that *Moses borrowed* the first nine or ten "chapters of Genesis from the literature of Egypt. Still less can the ada- "mantine pillars of our Christian faith be moved by the result of any debates "on the comparative antiquity of the Hindoos and Egyptians, or of any "inquiries into the Indian theology." For the remainder of this interesting article, I refer to the Work itself.

extent, and on which the daily increasing knowledge of Oriental literature and history, and the extension of physical and geological * discoveries are perpetually throwing new light. To

* On this subject, my countryman and friend, the *celebrated* MR. KIRWAN, has distinguished himself; vide his Essay on the primitive State of the Globe, and its subsequent catastrophe, in the 6th volume of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, p. 233; and his three Essays in support of it, in the beginning of the 8th vol.—Vide also the Rev. Mr. Graydon's curious memoir on the fish inclosed in stone in Mount Bolca, vol. 5. p. 281.

As to the *universality* of the *deluge*. I believe there is now no material difference of opinion among naturalists; it is supported by phenomena which carry with them decisive conviction. I will not presume to say that the *formation of the earth*, from the *primitive chaos* to the *habitable state*, has been yet so clearly explained by geologists, that we can appeal to any one theory as decidedly proved and clearly coincident with the Mosaic account; but sure I am, there is no theory decidedly proved and clearly contradictory to that account. The study of mineralogy (I do not think it is hitherto entitled to the name of science) is scarcely yet more than fifty years standing; that of geology is still more modern.—Let us not then rashly decide that either the Neptunian or the Volcanic theory is clearly proved, or that the credit of Scripture depends upon the admission of either. We certainly are not yet competent to decide the exact mode and order of the divine operations in which Almighty Power must have proceeded in creating and preparing this world for the use of man. Possibly we may never be competent to ascertain it. A power must then have been exerted very different, at least in the mode and degree of its operation, from that by which the ordinary course of nature is now conducted, and this last alone is the subject of our present observations. This I am sure of, that the progress of natural history, and the discovery of any laws of nature to which it may lead, will never be found ultimately subversive of the truth of Revelation: But prejudice, presumption, and rashness, may give plausibility and currency to conclusions apparently inconsistent with the truth of Scripture, and shake the faith of those in whom such dispositions prevail: against such causes of error I would earnestly warn my readers. Time was, when papal authority declared the theory of the earth's motion was so subversive of revealed religion, that the *Jesuits*, who *commented* on the *Principia of Newton*, prefixed to the 3d Volume the following declaration:

Newtonus in hoc libro, Telluris motæ Hypothesin assumit, Autoris propositiones aliter explicari non poterant nisi eadem quoque facta Hypothesi. Hinc alienam coacti sumus gerere personam; cæterum latis a summis Pontificibus contra Telluris motum decretis nos obsequi profitemur.

Let this declaration stand as a monument of the rashness of supposing Scripture at war with a philosophic theory.—The decrees of the Popes did not stop the motion of the earth, nor has *this* overturned the Christian faith,

treat such a subject superficially, would be neither creditable nor useful. To examine and discuss it with any moderate degree of accuracy, would demand much research, much labour,

though it may have shaken Papal infallibility.—Such, I am persuaded, will always be the final event. "Opinionum commenta delet dies naturæ (et Revelationis) judicia confirmat."

I beg leave to subjoin a remarkable instance of this, in the celebrated *objection advanced with such confidence by* Mr. BRYDONE and others, to disprove the Mosaic account of the period when the world was formed—which allows not quite 6,000 years to have yet elapsed, while these philosophers thought they had found a full proof that at least 14,000 had elapsed; so that these philosophers complain, that Moses hangs as a dead weight upon them, and blunts all their zeal for inquiry.—Their proof is this:* "The Canonice "Recupero, who is engaged in writing the history of Mount Etna, has "discovered a stratum of lava, which flowed from that mountain (according "to his opinion) in the time of the second Punic war, or about two thou-"sand years ago.—This stratum is not yet covered with soil sufficient for the "production of either corn or vines.—It requires then, says the Canon, two "thousand years at least to convert the stratum of lava into a fertile field. "Now in sinking a pit near *Jaci*, in the neighbourhood of Etna, they have "discovered evident marks of seven distinct lavas, one under the other, the "surfaces of which are parallel, and most of them covered with a thick bed "of rich earth; now the eruption which formed the lowest of these lavas "(if we may be allowed, says the Canon, to reason from analogy) flowed "from the mountain at least 14,000 years ago.

"In answer to this argument it might be urged, in the first place, that "the Canon has not established his main fact, that the lava in question "is the identical lava which Diodorus Siculus mentions to have flowed "from Etna in the second Carthagenian war; and in the next place, "it may be observed, that the time necessary for converting lavas into "fertile fields must be very different, according to the different consisten-"cies of the lavas, and their different situations with respect to eleva-"tion and depression, or their being exposed to winds, rains, and other "circumstances (as for instance, the quantity of ashes deposited over "them after they had cooled,) &c. &c. just as the time in which heaps "of iron flag (which resembles lava) are covered with verdure is different at "different furnaces, according to the nature of the flag and situation of the "furnace. And something of this kind is deducible from the account of the "Canon himself, since the crevices of this famous stratum are really full of "rich good soil, and have pretty large trees growing upon them. But (says "Bishop Watson) if all this should be thought not sufficient to remove the "objection, I will produce the Canon an analogy in opposition to his analogy, "and which is grounded on more certain facts:—

"Etna and Vesuvius resemble each other in the causes which produce

* Vide Watson's Apology, in Letters to Mr. Gibbon, from p. 169 to 174.

and much time; and I have no prospect of leisure for such a Work, were I even in other respects competent to it.

In truth, these Lectures which I now venture to submit to the public, have been composed with so many interruptions, and amidst so many avocations, as have, I am sensible, produced many inaccuracies of style which a careful revision might have enabled me to avoid; and too often, I fear, have prevented me from supporting my conclusions with as full an induction of facts, and as great a variety of illustrations and authorities, as might have been adduced. But I trust these defects have not extended to the essential parts of the Work, and that my general system of reasoning may be approved by the friends of virtue and piety: for that system I hold myself strictly responsible. No man has a right to trifle with the eternal interests of his fellow-creatures, and produce unweighed conjectures and crude opinions on such a subject as that of the following Work: for such presumptuous temerity, no pressure of business can apologize, and no display of learning or talents could atone. I would

" their eruptions, in the nature of their lavas, and in the time necessary to " mellow them into soil fit for vegetation; or if there be any slight difference " in this respect, it is probably not greater than what subsists between diffe- " rent lavas of the same mountain.

" This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the Canon's ana- " logy will prove just nothing at all, if we can produce an instance of *seven* " different lavas (*with interjacent strata of vegetable earth*) which have flowed " from Mount Vesuvius within the space not of 14,000, but of somewhat " less than 1700 years, for then, according to our analogy, a stratum of lava " may be covered with vegetable soil in about 250 years, instead of requiring " 2,000 for that purpose.

" The eruption of Vesuvius which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, " is rendered still more famous by the death of Pliny, recorded by his nephew " in his letter to Tacitus: this event happened A. D. 79. But we are informed " by unquestionable authority,† *that the matter which covers the ancient* " *town of Herculaneum is not the produce of* ONE *eruption only, for there* " *are evident marks that the matter of* SIX *eruptions has taken its course over* " *that which lies immediately over the town, and was the cause of its destruc-* " *tion. These strata are either of lava or burnt matter,* WITH VEINS OF GOOD " SOIL BETWEEN THEM.

† " See Sir William Hamilton's remarks upon the nature of the Soil of Naples and its neighbour- " hood, in the Philos. Trans. Vol. 61. p. 7."

not indeed have noticed a circumstance so unimportant to the reader as my private avocations, but from my anxious wish that the deficiencies of the advocate may not be mistaken on this occasion for proofs of weakness in the cause, which I am fully persuaded is the cause of truth and heaven; a cause which might have been maintained with more advantage even by me, but for the unfavourable circumstances to which I allude.

But I have said too much of myself and of my Work: I cannot however commit it to my readers without anxiously reminding them, that the effect of every species of religious instruction, and consequently of this, depends much more on the disposition prevalent in the heart of those to whom it is addressed, than on the degree of information conveyed to their understanding. Purity, seriousness and humility of mind, are the only sure guides to the eternal temple of religious truth; the opposite qualities will ever lead to error and impiety. And who is there who can avoid observing the want of seriousness, and above all, of humility of mind, in the opponents of Revelation? Whatever other characters they possess, I may venture to affirm, that either seriousness or humility, or both, are almost uniformly wanting; and yet assuredly these are peculiarly required on subjects affecting the destiny of the entire human race, and leading us to contemplate the nature and the dispensations of the supreme and incomprehensible God. May all who are led to peruse these pages, be impressed with due feelings of seriousness and humility, and guided by that spiritual wisdom without which the "things of God appear to man foolishness;" * may they be disposed to study, to receive, and to obey the will of their heavenly Father, "with all their heart,

"You perceive, says the Bishop, with what ease a little attention and "increase of knowledge may remove a great difficulty; but had we been "able to say nothing in explanation of this phenomenon, we should not "have acted a very rational part, in making *our ignorance* the foundation of "our infidelity, or suffering a minute philosopher to rob us of our religion."

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

and with all their soul, and with all their strength:"* then will they be able to "know of the doctrine whether it be of God;"† then will their understandings be enlarged, their faith confirmed, their salvation secured: And at the great day of final account, may it be found that he who thus warns and exhorts others, is not "himself a cast-away."

* Mark xii. 30. † John vii. 17.

P. S. In page x. I have said, "that the internal evidence of the four last books of the Pentateuch was a subject not preoccupied by any writer of established reputation." The learned reader will easily see that *Warburton's* celebrated work on the *Divine Legation of Moses*, was not forgotten when I made this assertion, as it appears to me to have *increased*, not superseded the necessity of reconsidering this subject with the closest attention. Vide infra, where the system of this eminent writer is reviewed.*

* Dr. Graves's references are made to the 4to edit. of 1788, now perhaps in very limited use;—but the sections and other divisions of the work being specified, the references will become perfectly facile to the recently published 8vo. edition.

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Remarks on some circumstances which have occasioned doubts as to the reality of some of the Mosaic miracles—General remarks on the improbability of objections which affect only some one miracle, not the entire series—Miracles in which the Magicians appeared to imitate Moses; Mr. Farmer's opinion on this subject, and the arguments by which he supports it—The passage of the Red Sea attempted to be accounted for without a miracle, from a passage of Josephus—True import of this passage—Supplies no evidence against the miracle—It is represented by Moses, and was believed by the Jews to be clearly miraculous—Inference from thence—Improbability of the Jews being able to escape by an extraordinary ebb of the sea—Dr. Geddes's observations on this subject—The pillar of cloud and fire which accompanied the Israelites—Attempted to be accounted for without a miracle—Account entirely inconsistent with the circumstances of the history, and with probability—Objection, from Moses's application to Hobab—Inconclusive—Miraculous preservation of the raiment of the Jews in the wilderness—Objected to—Why necessary—Review of the mode in which Dr. Geddes accounts for the whole series of Mosaic miracles, without admitting any supernatural interposition—His account unphilosophic and incredible. - - - 465

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In preparing for this Edition, I have endeavoured to avail myself, as far as I could, of the different kind and candid criticisms which have been passed upon this Work. But it is particularly gratifying to me to find that no criticisms have been offered, which rendered it necessary to alter my statement of facts, or my reasoning upon them, in any material particular.

I have judged it expedient to add THREE Lectures; one on the Originality and Design of the Jewish Ritual, which appeared necessary to complete the series of reasonings there adduced to confirm the divine original of the Jewish religion;—and the other two on the Accomplishment of Prophecy in the past history of the Jews, and the expectations which the same prophecies appear to justify as to the future Conversion and Restoration of this chosen People, and on the Circumstances of the World, at the period when these Lectures were written, which seemed preparatory to the accomplishment of these Expectations —a speculation into which the existence of those circumstances, together with the nature of the subject on which I had treated, almost irresistibly led me, but in which, I trust, it will not be found I have unreasonably or presumptuously indulged.

LECTURES

ON THE

FOUR LAST BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH.

PART I.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH, AND THE TRUTH OF THE HISTORY, BOTH OF COMMON AND MIRACULOUS EVENTS, CONTAINED IN THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF IT.

LECTURE I.

The Jewish Nation has received the Pentateuch as containing the only authentic History of their Lawgiver and his Institutions, from the very Æra when these Institutions commenced to the present day—Arguments to prove the reception of the Pentateuch from the present day, back to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish Captivity—Arguments to prove that the Pentateuch was not first compiled at that Æra, or altered and modified according to circumstances then existing; but that it was a previously existing and acknowledged Code—Pentateuch proved prior to the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah—Prior to the establishment of the Regal Government in Israel—Not first compiled by Samuel—Acknowledged by Joshua.

DEUTERONOMY, xxxi. 9, 10, 11.

"And Moses wrote this Law, and delivered it to the Priests the sons of Levi, which bare the Ark of "the Covenant of the Lord, and unto all the Elders of Israel: and Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the Feast of Ta- "bernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall "choose; thou shalt read this Law before all Israel, in their hearing."

Such is the charge which the Jewish Lawgiver is related to have delivered to his nation, while they were yet collected in one body under his command, on the borders of the land of their inheritance; solemnly publishing the volume of his law, and inculcating its constant preservation and periodical public recitation as a sacred duty, to which the priests and rulers of the people

were bound most religiously to attend. It shall be the object of this lecture to examine, how far it can be proved, that the Pentateuch which our Bible contains, is in all material points the same as the book of the Law thus uninterruptedly received by the Jewish nation, as having been written and published by their Lawgiver at the period of their first settlement in the land of Canaan; a point of the highest importance, to establish the truth of the facts which this portion of the Scripture history contains, and the divine original of that Law which it promulgates.

That the Jews have acknowledged the authenticity of the Pentateuch, from the present time back to the æra of their return from the Babylonish Captivity, a period of more than 2,300 years, admits not a possibility of doubt. The five books of Moses have been during that period constantly placed at the head of the Jewish sacred volume, and divided into fixed portions, one of which was read and explained in their synagogues, not only every Sabbath with the other Scriptures, but in many places twice a week, and not unfrequently every evening when they alone were read: they have been received as divinely inspired by every Jewish sect, even by the Sadducees, who questioned the divinity of the remaining works of the Old Testament.

In truth the veneration of the Jews for their Scriptures, and above all for the Pentateuch, seems to have risen almost to a superstitious reverence.* Extracts from the Mosaic Law were written on pieces of parchment, and placed on the borders of their garments, or round their wrists and foreheads; nay, they at a later period counted with the minutest exactness not only the chapters and paragraphs, but the words and letters, which each book of their Scripture contains: Thus also the translation, first of the Pentateuch, and afterwards of the remaining works of the Old Testament, into Greek, for the use of the Alexandrian Jews, disseminated this sacred volume over a great part of the civilized world, in the language most universally understood, and rendered it accessible to the learned and inquisitive in every country; so as to preclude all suspicion that it could

* Compare Deut. xxii. 12. and Numbers, xv. 38 and 39, with Matt. xxiii. 5. They are in use at this day. Vid. Picart's Ceremonies Religieuses, for the forms and modes in which they are written and worn: Vol. I. p. 5. Part I. ch. xi. 2.

be materially altered by either Jews or Christians, to support their respective opinions as to the person and character of the Messiah; the substance of the text being by this translation fixed and authenticated at least 270 years before the appearance of our Lord.

But how far have we reason to believe that the Pentateuch was not first compiled after the Babylonish Captivity, from the indistinct traditions of the history of the Jewish nation, which, in an absence of seventy years from their country, may perhaps have lost all clear records of former events? In answer to this suspicion I observe, that it is not supported by any semblance of probability, because the period of seventy years was not long enough to lose all clear public records of former events: nineteen years of the captivity of the Jewish nation had elapsed before the burning of the Temple, and the carrying away the last of the people; it is therefore perfectly credible that many individuals then alive may have survived the close of the Captivity, and witnessed the rebuilding of the second Temple; and of this really having taken place we have direct testimony. "Many," says Ezra, * "of the Priests and Le-"vites, and chief of the Fathers, who were ancient men, "that had seen the first house; when the foundation of this "house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice:" Doubtless from the melancholy contrast between the magnificence of the old Temple, and the infancy and poverty of the new.

Still further: Not only the individuals who remained could compare the circumstances which had existed before the Captivity, and thus could not be deceived by so gross an imposition as any attempt to fabricate, as the public code of the national religion and government, a new compilation never before heard of; but we know that writings of far less importance were preserved; for example, no priests were admitted to resume their offices, who could not trace back their genealogy to Aaron and the heads of the Levites contemporary with Moses: In the book of Ezra who presided over the Jews after their restoration from the Babylonish Captivity, the particular families are specified, "who sought their "register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, † but "they were not found, therefore were they, as polluted, put

* Ezra, iii. 12, and Nehem. vii. 64. † Ezra, ii. 62.

"from the priesthood."—Nor was this exactness in tracing genealogies confined to the Priests; we are told of others,* who "could not show their father's house and their seed, whether they were of Israel." And the reason of this exactness is plain from this; that such of the Jews as believed their prophets, expected a return into their native land after a period of seventy years, and preserved their genealogies,† as the titles on which they might resume their properties, with the same care which they had always employed from the very first commencement of the state. Thus Jeremiah the prophet, for the express purpose of impressing upon the Jews the expectation of their deliverance, is represented as "purchasing a field according to "the right of redemption, subscribing the evidence, and seal-"ing it before witnesses, and giving it to Baruch the scribe," and charging him before all that were present, saying, "Thus "saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,‡ Take these evi-"dences, this evidence of the purchase, both that which is "sealed and that which is open, and put them in an earthen "vessel, that they may continue many days; for thus saith the "Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, houses and fields and vine-"yards shall be possessed again in this land." Now is it possible that the whole nation should lose all public records of their public Law, when they preserved public records of the descent of private families? Is it possible that the genealogies of the priests and their distinct offices should be preserved, while the Law that described these offices, and assigned them to different families, was forgotten? Is it probable that the § identical vessels and furniture of the Temple which had been carried away at the beginning of the Captivity, should be restored as they are recorded to have been, and that no one copy of whatever code existed to regulate the laws and religion of the whole nation, as well as the Temple worship, should be preserved?

The only thing which gives the least plausibility to this suspicion is, that we are told that the Jews had during the Captivity

* Ezra, ii. 59 and 60.

† To show the constant accuracy of the Jews in preserving their genealogies, and the necessity of their doing so, vid. Numb. i. compared with ch. xxxiii. 54. and Josh. xiv. Vid. also 1 Chronicles, the nine first chapters, particularly ch. v. 7 and 17, and ch. ix. 1 and 22.

‡ Vide Jeremiah, xxxii. 14. Vide the entire chapter, from ver. 6 to the end.

§ Ezra, vi. 5.

(as these objectors say) lost their language; hence it is rashly inferred, that they also lost all records in the language. Now the real fact is this, that the original language of the Jews had indeed degenerated among the great mass of the people, by the corruption of foreign dialects; but the learned part of the nation still perfectly understood it, and were able to interpret it with ease; and the records contained in it * lost nothing of their clearness or their use. Further, this very circumstance supplies no weak presumptive argument, that as the Pentateuch which now exists is written in pure Hebrew, it was composed before the Captivity.

This probable conclusion acquires almost resistless force, when we consider the direct testimony, first of the Jews, and next of the Samaritans. The tenor of their history after the Captivity represents the Jews, not as regulating their religion and policy by any new Law, but as reviving the observance of the old Law given by Moses, interpreting it with humble veneration, and submitting to it with the most prompt obedience.

Ezra is distinguished as the scribe, because he was a ready scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; and very many others also are mentioned, "who caused the people to understand the Law." The manner in which, by the assistance of those learned interpreters, it was read and explained to the people, is so decisive of the present point as to deserve our whole attention. We are told that † "all the people "were gathered together as one man; and they spake unto "Ezra the Scribe, to bring the book of the Law of Moses, "*which* the Lord had commanded to Israel; and Ezra brought "*the* Law before the congregation both of men and women, "and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first "day of the seventh month—and he read therein from the "morning until the mid-day, and the ears of all the people "were attentive unto the book of the Law.—And all the people "went their way, to eat and to drink, and to make great mirth, "because they had understood the words which were declared "unto them; and on the second day were gathered together "the chief of the fathers of all the people, the Priests and "the Levites, to Ezra the scribe, to understand the words of

* Vid. Ezra, passim; particularly ch. ii. 2. vi. 18.
† Vid. Nehemiah, the entire chapters, viii. ix. and x.

"the Law; and they found written in the Law which the Lord "had commanded to Moses, that the children of Israel should "dwell in booths, in the feast of the seventh month; and all "the congregation of them that were come again out of the "Captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since "the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day, had not "the children of Israel done so, and there was very great "gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last "day, he read in the book of the Law of God; and they kept the "feast seven days, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly "according to the manner which the Law prescribed." Undoubtedly it is probable that Ezra prepared for use new copies of the Mosaic Law, that a sufficient number might be ready to supply the demands of the people. In doing this he may have inserted some notes, to explain or complete passages obscure or defective. But what symptoms are there in this history of a new compilation, a code of doubtful authority, a collection of uncertain traditions? How idle is it to talk of these things, when the fact is so plainly the reverse.

We have yet a stronger proof that the Law thus offered to the people was not a selection and revival of such former laws alone as suited their present temper and situation; such laws as were agreeable to the general wishes of the people, and therefore might be supposed to obtain general submission without any minute inquiry into their authority. No, the case was otherwise; the code thus received enjoined in some instances sacrifices the most severe and distressing to individuals, sacrifices which no politic governor would have ventured to propose, and which no people would have submitted to, if any doubt could have been raised as to the authority of the Law requiring them. For, as the Scribes read the book of Moses "in the "audience of the people, therein was found written, * that "the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the "congregation of the Lord for ever; now it came to pass, that "when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel "all the mixed multitude." Even this must have created great discontent, and excited much opposition, if the authority of the law requiring it had not been clear and unquestioned. But there was yet a more trying proof of obedience required.

* Nehemiah, xiii. 1 and 3.

The Mosaic code commanded that Jews should not intermarry with any of the neighbouring idolatrous nations. On the dissolution of the state and the dispersion of the people at the Captivity, this law was violated in numerous instances; on the reassembling of the people, the violation was too glaring to escape the notice of the zealous supporters of the divine code. The history of Ezra describes in the strongest colours the feelings of grief and alarm which this discovery excited, the vast numbers who were involved in this guilt, and the high rank and authority of many of the offenders.* "The princes," says Ezra, "came to me saying, The people of Israel, and the "Priests and the Levites, have not separated themselves from "the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations; "for they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for "their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with "the people of those lands; yea, the hands of the princes and "rulers have been chief in this trespass."

"When Ezra," says the history, "had prayed, and when he "had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the "house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel, a very "great congregation of men and women and children; and "the people wept very sore, and Shechaniah on the part of the "chiefs of the people, answered and said unto Ezra, We have "trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of "the people of the land, yet now there is hope in Israel con-"cerning this thing; now therefore let us make a covenant "with our God, to PUT AWAY ALL THE STRANGE WIVES, AND "SUCH AS ARE BORN OF THEM, according to the counsel of "my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of "our God, and let it be done according to the Law. Then arose "Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Scribes, and all Israel, "to swear that they should do according to this word: and they "sware." And proclamation was made unto all the children of the Captivity to enforce this law. The greatness of the sacrifice may be estimated by the severity of the penalty under which it was enjoined: "Whosoever would not come within "three days, to comply with this law, all his substance was to "be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation." And the offenders assembled in great numbers, and certain of

* Ezra, the entire chapters ix and x.

the elders and judges were appointed to examine the matter, and so many did the enquiry extend to, that it held for three entire months; and among the offenders we find many of the Priests and Levites: it was not therefore a contrivance of theirs to strengthen their influence. In a word, I rely on this fact as a full proof, that the code the Jews received after the Captivity was in all respects the very same they had been subject to before it; not then newly compiled, not then artfully modified, but brought forward exactly as they found it, in the known records of the nation, and submitted to with scrupulous reverence, as of undoubted and divine authority.

Strong as this proof is, we have another which may perhaps be deemed even stronger; the Samaritans, * we know, from the period of the Captivity became the most bitter enemies of the Jews; this animosity was greatly enflamed at the close of the Captivity, because the Jews would not permit them to join in building the Temple. For they proposed to the chief of the fathers; "Let us build with you, for we seek your God, as you "do, and we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of Esarhad-"don, king of Assyria, who brought us up hither." But their proposal was rejected with contempt. These Samaritans must then have derived their knowledge of the Mosaic institutions from a code which existed at the commencement of the Captivity. According to the history,† which relates, "a priest from amongst "the captive Jews was sent to teach the colony planted by the "king of Assyria in Samaria, the manner of the God of the "land, and he came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how "they should fear the Lord," undoubtedly by instructing them in the Mosaic Law. They would never have received as the rule of their religion a new compilation, formed by their enemies at the very moment when they rejected their alliance, and would not acknowledge them as partakers of their religion, or admit them to worship at their Temple. And what is the code which the Samaritans acknowledged? The Pentateuch, and nothing but the Pentateuch. This they preserved, written indeed in a different character from that which the Jews use; they have in some few places altered it, to support the claim of their Temple to a precedence and a sacredness above the Temple at Jerusa-

* 2 Kings, xvii. from ver. 24 to the end; and Ezra, iv.; Nehem. iv. & vi.
† 2 Kings, xvii. 27, 28.

lem; but in all other respects it is precisely the same with the Pentateuch which is preserved by the Jews with the same scrupulous reverence, as of unquestioned divine authority. Does it then admit a doubt, that the code thus received by these two hostile nations, had been acknowledged by both as of divine authority before that hostility took place? I conclude that the Pentateuch was the known sacred Law of the Jews before the Babylonish Captivity commenced, about 580 years before our Saviour's birth.

Further: An argument of a similar nature brings us through a period of 377 years, and establishes the authority of the Pentateuch, from the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by the Babylonish Captivity, back to its separation from the kingdom of Israel under the son and immediate successor of Solomon. From the revolt of the ten tribes, it became the decided political interest of their monarchs, to alienate them as far as possible from the religion and the Temple of the monarch of Jerusalem. The very first king of Israel discerned this interest, and prosecuted it to the utmost of his power, without the least scruple as to the religious or moral consequences of the means which he determined to adopt; for "Jeroboam* said in his heart, Now "shall the kingdom return to the house of David, if this people "go up to do sacrifice in the House of the Lord at Jerusalem; "then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their Lord, "even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me, "and go again to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Whereupon the king "took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto the "people: It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem, behold thy "Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. "And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the "lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi: "and he ordained a feast in the eighth month, like unto the "feast which is in Judah; and he placed in Bethel the priests "which he had made." Such was the design of the first king of Israel; a design almost uniformly adhered to by all his successors. Now, to the full and secure completion of this design, the Pentateuch interposed the great obstacle. It allows no such separation of the tribes; it supposes them all united in one confederate body, governed by the same common counsel, re-

* 1 Kings, xii. 26.

cognizing one High Priest, by whom they were to consult the oracle; and commands all the males of the twelve tribes to repair three times a year to their common Temple, to join in a common form of worship, in adoration of their common God. This system was therefore entirely unfavourable to the views of the kings of Israel. If, then, its authority had not been acknowledged before the separation of the two kingdoms, would these monarchs, so watchful and so politic in guarding their separate sway, have permitted it to be introduced and received, to be fabricated and imposed upon the whole Jewish race, and published before the face of that part of it which they governed, as the system which both nations, when united, had acknowledged as of divine authority? Would they, I say, have permitted all this, without making one effort to detect and expose an imposition so flagrant in itself, and so injurious to them? Nay, more, would they, in the very act of forming a new system of worship, while they indulged the gross ideas and idolatrous propensities of their people, by representing the true God under idolatrous symbols; would they, at that very moment, have imitated the rites, and fasts, and sacrifices, of that very code, whose influence they wished to undermine; "ordaining a feast "in the eighth month like unto the feast which is in Judah?"* Assuredly not, except that code had been previously and universally admitted as of divine original, which they knew their subjects had been long habituated to reverence and obey. I conclude from hence, that the authority of the Pentateuch was acknowledged antecedent to the separation of the kingdom of Israel and Judah, above 970 years before the birth of Christ.

But perhaps it may be asserted, that the support which the Pentateuch gives to the claims of the kings of Judah, renders it probable that it may have been compiled for the purpose of favouring their views: and that perhaps its authority was rejected by the kings of Israel and their subjects, though the history of their opposition is now lost; the kingdom of Judah having long survived that of Israel, and reunited all the Hebrews under one common government, and having perhaps taken care to obliterate all records that could justify the past or lead to a future separation. To this I answer, that the Samaritans, who,

* 1 Kings, xii. 32.

though hostile to the Jews, acknowledged the Pentateuch, succeeded to the ten tribes in the possession of their country; that they were intermingled with their posterity; and that it is not possible such a circumstance could have taken place, as that the original Samaritans should have rejected the Law which the Jews received, and for a series of 230 years should have combated its authority; and that immediately after, their successors should have received this Law, and this only, as of divine original, without preserving the least trace of its ever having been disputed; though an hostility as strong subsisted between them and the restored Jews, as had before the Captivity divided the separate kingdoms.

Two particular examples, deserving peculiar attention, occur in the Jewish history, of the public and solemn homage paid to the sacredness of the Mosaic Law as promulgated in the Pentateuch, and by consequence affording the fullest testimony to the authenticity of the Pentateuch itself: the one in the reign of Hezekiah, while the separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel still subsisted; and the other in the reign of his great grandson Josiah, subsequent to the Captivity of Israel. In the former we see the pious monarch of Judah,* assembling the Priests and Levites and the rulers of the people, to deplore with him the trespasses of their fathers against the divine Law, to acknowledge the justice of those chastisements which according to the prophetic warnings of that Law had been inflicted upon them, to open the house of God which his father had impiously shut, and restore the true worship therein according to the Mosaic ritual; with the minutest *particulars* of which he complied, in the sin-offerings and the peace-offerings which in conjunction with his people he offered, for the kingdom and the sanctuary and the people, to make atonement to God for them, and for all Israel; restoring the service of God as it had been performed in the purest times. "And Hezekiah" (says the sacred narrative†) "rejoiced, and "all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing "was done suddenly:" immediately on the king's accession to the throne, on the first declaration of his pious resolution. How clear a proof does this exhibit of the previous existence and clearly acknowledged authority of those laws which the Pentateuch contains.

* 2 Kings, xviii. 2 Chron. xxix. & xxx. † Ib. xxix. 36.

But a yet more remarkable part of this transaction still remains: At this time Hoshea was king of Israel, and so far disposed to countenance the worship of the true God, that he appears to have made no opposition to the pious zeal of Hezekiah; who with the concurrence of the whole congregation which he had assembled, sent out letters and made a proclamation, not only to his own people of Judah,* "but to Ephraim and Manasseh and all Israel, from Beersheba even unto Dan, that "they should come to the House of the Lord at Jerusalem, to "keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel; saying,† Ye "children of Israel, turn again to the Lord God of Abraham, "Isaac and Jacob, and he will return to the remnant of you who "are escaped out of the hands of the kings of Assyria;, and be "not ye like your fathers and your brethren, which trespassed "against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave "them up to desolation as ye see. Now be ye not stiff-necked "as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and "enter into his sanctuary which he hath sanctified for ever, "and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath "may turn away from you. So the posts passed from city to "city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even "unto Zebulun."

Now, can we conceive that such an attempt as this could have been made, if the Pentateuch containing the Mosaic Code had not been as certainly recognized through the ten tribes of Israel as in the kingdom of Judah? The success was exactly such as we might reasonably expect if it were so acknowledged; for, though many of the ten tribes laughed to scorn and mocked the messengers of Hezekiah, who invited them to the solemnity of the Passover, from the impious contempt which through long disuse they had conceived for it; "Nevertheless," says the sacred narrative,‡ "divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun "humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem; and there as-"sembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of "unleavened bread in the second month, a very great con-"gregation; and they killed the Passover, and the Priests "and Levites stood in their places after their manner, ac-"cording to the Law of Moses, the man of God. So there "was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon

* 2 Chron. xxx. 1. † Ib. xxx. 6. &c. ‡ Ib. xxx. 11

"the Son of David king of Israel, there was not the like at "Jerusalem;* and when all this was finished, all Israel that "were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the "images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down "the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in "Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed "them all." Can any clearer proof than this be desired, of the constant and universal acknowledgment of the divine authority of the Pentateuch throughout the entire nation of the Jews, notwithstanding the idolatries and corruptions which so often prevented its receiving such obedience as that acknowledgment ought to have produced?

Not less remarkable was the solemn recognition of the divine authority of the Pentateuch by king Josiah and the whole people of the Jews, whose pious monarch while he was "yet "young, began to seek after the God of David his father,"† destroying idols and banishing idolatry throughout the entire extent of his dominions, and proceeding to repair the House of the Lord, that he might restore his worship with due solemnity.

On this occasion, says the narrative, when they brought out the money that had been brought into the House of the Lord (to receive which they had probably opened the most secret and secure place for a deposit in the Temple) ‡ "the priests found "a book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses," (more accurately by the hand of Moses, possibly the sacred autograph of Moses himself originally deposited in the Ark); "and Hil-"kiah said to Shaphan the Scribe, I have found the book of "the Law in the House of the Lord, and he delivered the book "to Shaphan, who read it before the king."

The passage read, seems to have been that part of Deuteronomy which contains the prophetic declarations of the Lawgiver against the future apostasies of his people, which were so awful and severe as to excite the utmost terror in the young and pious monarch, § "for he rent his clothes, and sent to enquire "of the Lord concerning the words of the book that is found; "for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, "because our forefathers have not kept the word of the Lord, "to do all that is written in this book." And Huldah the prophetess, who was consulted, declared that God would cer-

* 2 Chron. xxxi. † Ib. xxxiv. 3. ‡ Ib. xxxiv. 14. § 2 Chron. xxxiv. 19, &c.

tainly fulfil the denunciations of that book; but yet that, in consequence of the humiliation and repentance of the king, "he "should be gathered to the grave in peace, neither should his "eyes see all the evil which God would bring upon Jerusalem. "And the king," continues the narrative, * went up into the "House of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabi- "tants of Jerusalem, and the Priest and the Levites, and all "the people great and small, and he read in their ears all the "words of the book of the Covenant that was found in the House "of the Lord. And the king stood in his place and made a "Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep "his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with "all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words "of the Covenant which were written in this book; and he "caused all them that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin "to stand to it: and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according "to the Covenant of their God, the God of their fathers."

The sacred history proceeds to detail the particular circumstances of the Levites being employed in their due courses, † and the solemn celebration of the Passover, "as it is written in "the book of the Covenant;" and there was no such Passover, says the history, kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel the Prophet: probably because the recent captivity of the ten tribes awakened the fears and secured the universal concurrence of all Judah and Israel, who were present, as well as of all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; who now concurred with the king, ‡ "to perform the "words of the Law, which were written in the book that Hil- "kiah the priest found in the House of the Lord." Which could not possibly have been any other than the Pentateuch of Moses; probably the very copy written by himself.

These facts and arguments seem sufficiently decisive: they may be confirmed by another argument from the internal structure of the Pentateuch, which I do not recollect to have seen noticed; and which not only meets this objection, but goes further, and seems to prove it highly improbable that the Pentateuch should have been compiled and received, if of a late date or doubtful authority, during any period of the regal government in Judah. The argument is this, That the civil form of government which the Pentateuch exhibits, IS NOT REGAL; it is indeed

* Chron. xxxiv. 30. † 2 Chron. xxxv. 18. ‡ 2 Kings, xxiii. 24.

of a very singular kind: says the judicious Lowman*, "It will "easily appear, that the general union of the tribes as one "body, may be conceived after this manner: that the congre- "gation of Israel or the whole people, enacted by themselves or "their representatives; that the great council advised, consulted, "and proposed; that the judge presided in their councils, and "had the chief hand in executing what was resolved in them; "and that Jehovah, by the oracle, was to assent to and approve "what was resolved, and authorise the execution of it in matters "of the greatest importance to the whole state. So that the "general union of the whole nation may not improperly be thus "expressed, It was by the command of the people, and advice of "the senate; the judge presiding, and the oracle approving." The Jewish government was, therefore, what no other ever was, A THEOCRACY; in which the last appeal was to Jehovah himself, expressing his will by the oracle; and in which there was no power either to make or repeal new laws, the laws of the nation being the laws of Jehovah. We must also observe, that the judge was rather an occasional than a constant magistrate, nominated, or at least approved by the oracle; never invested with authority for more than his own life, and without the least idea of an hereditary right.

Further: The Mosaic code does not merely appoint a constitution, of which kingly government was no part; but it notices this government as an innovation which the people would introduce, after the example of the surrounding nations; and it lays the kings under restraints which were equally irksome to their sensuality and their ambition †. "He shall not multiply wives "unto himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he "greatly multiply to himself silver and gold; neither shall he "multiply horses to himself nor cause the people to return "into Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; "forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth "return no more that way." And the Law of Moses was to be in every point his guide; "and it shall be," saith the legislator, "when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall "write him a copy of this Law in a book, out of that which is "before the Priests and the Levites; and it shall be with him,

* Vide Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, ch. vii.
† Deuteronomy, xvii. 16, &c.

"and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may "learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this "Law and these statutes to do them." When the Jews first solicited from Samuel* a king, after they had lived near 400 years under their original form of government, he was displeased, and represented this demand as in some degree a rejection of God as their king; and he stated in strong terms the oppressions and the mischiefs they should suffer under the kingly government. Now it is remarkable, that the restraints imposed by the Masaic Law were grossly and fatally violated by Solomon, the most renowned and powerful of the Jewish kings.

On this fact then I argue, that if the Mosaic Law had not been universally known and revered as of divine authority long before the time of Samuel, it could never have been compiled and received during the kingly government: he would not have ventured to oppose the wishes of the people in appointing a king, on the pretext of its being a rejection of God for their king; nor would he have attempted to impose such restraints on the monarchs of the Jews, if unsupported by a previously admitted authority: such a fabrication would never have escaped detection and exposure, either by Saul, who for the last years of his life was in constant enmity with Samuel; or by Solomon, who amidst his power and prosperity must have felt his fame wounded, and his passions rebuked, by the stern condemnation of the Mosaic Law. The preceding argument shows the extreme improbability of a supposition which has been sometimes resorted to, that Samuel was the compiler of the Pentateuch.

We have now ascended to within less than 400 years from the promulgation of the Mosaic Law; a period during which the Jews had lived in the uninterrupted possession of the land in which they were settled by Moses and his immediate successor; and without any fundamental alteration in the form of that government under which they were originally placed; and if we have reason to believe that the Pentateuch was admitted as the true system of the Mosaic Law at the close of that period, no possible æra during its continuance can be pointed out, at which the fabrication of such a code may be supposed probable or so much as credible; no motive or circumstance can be assigned as the origin of such a fabrication, or to account for the ready and

* 1 Samuel, viii. 10.

universal credit which it must have obtained; no body of men, even no individual can be discovered, whose interest it was to form such a fabrication, or who could have had an influence sufficiently powerful and permanent to give it currency.

The history of the Jews proves, indeed, that they were very far from adhering strictly to the Mosaic Law during that period: we find that they frequently violated it in the grossest manner, and fell into great disorders and idolatries, and in consequence suffered great calamities. But what was the general effect of these calamities? That they repented of their disobedience, and again submitted to the Law of Moses as the Law of God. Now would this have been natural, if they entertained any doubts of the authenticity of the code containing that Law? Would the people and the rulers and the priests, on the authority of a new compilation, have received as the ancient constitutions of the land, laws and customs they had never before heard of, which condemned the vices and idolatries of every class in the strongest terms, and threatened them with the severest punishments? Surely this is utterly improbable: that prosperity should corrupt a nation, and lead it to neglect the most sacred obligations, is credible; that, though corrupted and depraved, calamity should rouse them to repentance, is also credible; but that they should ascribe their calamities to the violation of a Law whose authority they had never acknowledged, that in the midst of vice and corruption a new code should be fabricated, condemning that vice and corruption, and imposed upon the nation as the known Law of their fathers without opposition, is surely most improbable and strange.

We are not, however, driven to rest the universal reception of the Pentateuch on presumptive arguments or probable conjecture alone: we have the most decisive and uninterrupted, the most positive and direct external testimony. We have a number of different tracts, acknowledged by the Jews as not only genuine, but divine: these works are, the latest of them, written during or shortly after the Babylonish Captivity, as their very language indicates; they take up the history of the Jews from that period, and carry it regularly back to their first settlement in their country by Joshua the successor of Moses, and thus bring us into contact with the legislator himself. They are to a certainty written by a great variety of persons and for very different purposes; some of them plain histories, and al-

most chronological annals: others of them prophetical and mysterious; others poetical and popular; hymns in praise of God, his providence, and laws, or celebrating great national events, or deploring national calamities. And all these multiplied and various compositions unite in presupposing the existence and the truth of the Pentateuch, and uniformly refer to and quote it as the only true and genuine account of the ancient history, and known laws of the Jews: they recite its facts, they refer to its laws, they celebrate its author; they appeal to the people, to the kings, to the priests; they rebuke and threaten them for neglecting the Mosaic Law, as it is contained in the Pentateuch; and what is most decisive, they never once give the least hint of any rival law, of any new compilation, of any doubt as to its authenticity. To quote from all, would be as unnecessary as it would be tedious. I will adduce one or two testimonies from the book of Joshua, the immediate successor of Moses, which will, I trust, be satisfactory and decisive.

When Joshua is represented as receiving the divine commission to undertake the command of the Jews, it was on this condition: * "Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou "mayest observe to do according to all the Law which Moses "my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right "hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever "thou goest. This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy "mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that "thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written "therein." When he had conquered a considerable part of the promised land, we find him forming a great assembly of the people, in compliance with the direction of the Law: and he "built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as "Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the Children of "Israel, as it is written in the book of the Law of Moses, † an "altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any "iron: and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the Lord, "and sacrificed peace-offerings. And he wrote on the stones a "copy of the Law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of "the Children of Israel. ‡ And all Israel, and their elders

* Josh. i. 7. † Ib. viii. 30.

‡ This, as Mr. Locke observes, is evidently a completion of the direction in Deuteronomy, ch. xxvii. And the Law engraven on the plastered stones, now set up, was no more than the decalogue itself, or the formula of bles-

"and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the Ark and "on that side, before the Priests and the Levites which bare "the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, "as he that was born among them; half of them over against "Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal, "as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that "they should bless the people of Israel. And afterwards he "read all the words of the Law, the blessings and cursings, "according to all that is written in the book of the Law: there "was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua "read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the "women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were con- "versant among them."

Such was the solemn promulgation of the Mosaic Law, at the very commencement of the settlement of the Jews in the land of their inheritance; and in every subsequent transaction of Joshua, we find he acted according to the same Law: * "As the "Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command "Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that "the Lord commanded Moses." Moses had appointed the mode of distributing the land among the tribes, and according to his command was the mode adopted. He commanded that the Levites should have no inheritance in land, and no inheritance was given them: he commanded that six cities of refuge for him who had been unintentionally guilty of manslaughter should be appointed, and they were appointed: he commanded that eight-and-forty cities should be given to the Levites out of the different tribes, by lot, and they were so given. When the conquest of the land was completed, and the people had rest, the soldiers of the two tribes and a half, whom Moses had planted east of Jordan, wished to be dismissed to their families; Joshua dismissed them with this panegyric and this charge: † "Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord com- "manded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I com- "manded you; therefore now return ye, and get ye unto your "tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the

sing and cursing in confirmation of the decalogue, contained in twelve verses of that chapter, and to be solemnly pronounced by the twelve tribes assembled for that purpose at the erection of this public monument, of the solemn public reading and recognition of the Mosaic Law.

* Joshua, xi. 15. † Joshua, xxii. 2, 4, 5.

"servant of the Lord gave you on the other side Jordan. But "take diligent heed to do the commandment and the Law, "which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love "the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep "his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him "with all your heart and with all your soul." And, to close all, when Joshua was old, and was conscious of his approaching death, he "called for all Israel, and for their Elders, and "for their Heads, and for their Judges, and for their Officers;" he recounts the benefits of God, he recapitulates the history and the warnings of the Pentateuch, and commanded them, "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep, and to do all that is "written in the book of the Law of Moses, that ye turn not "aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left. And the "people said unto Joshua, the Lord our God will we serve, "and his voice will we obey: so Joshua made a covenant with "the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance "in Shechem; and Joshua wrote these words in the book of "the Law of God, and set up a monument of the transaction "by the sanctuary of the Lord." * Now, what was this book of the Law? Undoubtedly the same of which it is said, that "when Moses had made an end of writing the words of the "Law in a book, until they were finished; he commanded the "Levites, and said, take this book of the Law, and put it in "the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, "that it may be a witness against you." That book which he commanded to be read before all Israel, at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, at the feast of tabernacles. This surely must have been the same with that which the Jews have received, from the present hour back to the Babylonish Captivity: which must have preceded that event, because it is also received by the hostile Samaritans, who were planted in Judea at the commencement of the Captivity; which must have preceded the division of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, because it was acknowledged in both; which must have preceded the establishment of the kings, because it supposes no such form of government, but rather condemns it. In a word, that book of the Law, which every writer, and

* Joshua, xxii. 2, 6. xxiv. 24—26. Vide the entire twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters.

every sect amongst the Jews have quoted and acknowledged, in every possible form of quotation and acknowledgment, from the present period, back to the immediate successor of Moses himself, who solemnly attests its authenticity and divine original. I trust, therefore, I have sufficiently established the introductory point I wished to prove; even that the Jewish nation has received the Pentateuch, as containing an authentic account of the conduct and institutions of their celebrated legislator, from the very æra when these institutions commenced.

LECTURE II.

The Authenticity and Truth of the four last books of the Pentateuch, proved from the subject and structure of the history, so far as the facts are not miraculous—Importance and peculiar nature of its various regulations concerning property—Publicity and importance of the main series of facts—Marks of truth in the minute detail of these facts—Simplicity of style and narrative—Selection and arrangement of facts and circumstances, such as is natural if Moses were the writer, unaccountable otherwise—Impartiality—Comparison of the Pentateuch, in this respect, with Josephus.

DEUTERONOMY, XXXI. 9.

"And Moses wrote all this Law, and delivered it unto the Priests, the sons of Levi, and unto all the Elders of Israel."

It is the object of these lectures, to prove the divine original of that Law which the Jewish legislator is stated to have thus solemnly delivered to his nation. The four last books of the Pentateuch contain this Law, and the history of the facts on which its authority is founded; it is therefore necessary to prove that these books are genuine, and the history they relate true. The proof of this may be deduced, either from the external testimony by which their truth and genuineness is supported, or from the internal structure of the works themselves. The former topic I have already noticed, and endeavoured to show that these books have been received by the Jews from the very first settlement of their nation, as containing an authentic and faithful account of their lawgiver and his institutions. And if they have been so received, we can scarcely doubt the truth of the facts which they detail; for it must be remembered, that the history does not relate the origin of the Jews as a nation, after a length of time had elapsed, when we might suppose fiction may have been employed to conceal the weakness or the barbarism of its infancy, but that it was published

and received while these events were transacting, or immediately after they had taken place, and that it was incorporated with the system of Laws by which the religion of the people was from the very first regulated; on which their liberties were founded; by which the rights and privileges of every class and every profession were adjusted; and, above all, by which the distribution and the descent of property were determined. We may also remark, that the nature of several Laws concerning property, was such, that if they had not been enacted before its distribution among the people, and established as the tenure and condition on which it was held, their introduction at any subsequent period would have excited a great ferment and great opposition. Such was the Law of release from all debts and all personal servitude every seventh year;* and that Law which ordered, that if the property of any family had been alienated by sale, it should be restored to the family every fiftieth year, or year of Jubilee. All who know the commotions which attempts to discharge debts, and change the distribution of property, have always excited, and who recollect the examples of Sparta, Athens, and Rome, in this matter, will be sensible, that a code, containing such regulations as these, could not have been established as the regular Law of the Jewish state, without opposition, except before the distribution of property, and as the condition on which it was held; and therefore, before the settlement of the Jews in the land of their inheritance.

Another regulation as to property, occurs in Leviticus, of a singular kind: "When," (says the Lawgiver†) "ye shall come "into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for "food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: "three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not "be eaten of. But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall "be holy to praise the Lord withal. And in the fifth year "shall ye eat of the fruit thereof: I am the Lord your God." Now, would such a regulation as this have been observed, if it had not been established on clear authority, before the Jews took possession of the promised land? And if it never had been established and observed, what motive could have induced

* Vide Deuteronomy, xv. and Leviticus, xxv. † Leviticus, xix. 23—25.

a fictitious writer to load his account with so improbable and so apparently * useless a circumstance? Does it not, therefore, supply a presumptive argument, that the system of which it forms a part, was known and received by the Jewish nation before their settlement in the promised land?

I now proceed to confirm the conclusion thus derived from the testimony of the Jewish nation, still further, by considering the internal structure of the history itself. If the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses, it is a forgery imposed upon the nation in his name. It is totally impossible this should have been done during the life of the legislator, or immediately after his death, during the lives of his cotemporaries. If then the Pentateuch was not the original record of Moses himself, it was the work of some compiler in a period long subsequent, who assumed the character, and wrote in the name of the Jewish Lawgiver, to answer some design different from genuine truth. And if so, we can hardly fail of discerning, in the texture of the work itself, marks of a compilation long subsequent to the facts it relates. We cannot but perceive some traces of the particular purpose for which it was composed. If it was calculated to obtain fame for its author, as an elaborate and beautiful composition, this will appear in its style and sentiments; if it was intended to falsify the history, in order to gratify personal vanity, party interest or national pride, this will be discernible. Let us then examine whether the four last books of the Pentateuch are liable to any such suspicions as these. Are the facts and institutions which they contain, so public and important, that we cannot suppose any account of them materially false could, at any time, be fabricated and imposed upon the nation? And if this be so evident that we must admit the main substance of the history to be true, yet can we be sure of truth in its minuter detail? Does this relation bear in it the marks of simplicity and undesignedness, of impartiality and sincerity? Does it exhibit such particularity, and exact suitableness to the different situations in which the author is supposed to have been placed, as indicate a writer engaged in the transactions he

* It was not, I am persuaded, really useless; it may have been to give the trees age and strength, and to give the eaters a knowledge of what was wholesome or otherwise, which, after their long detention in the desert, they might not be sufficiently acquainted with.

describes, and recording them from his own personal knowledge with exact fidelity? And finally, are the miraculous facts of the history so blended with, and so necessary to the common events, and related with such clear characters of simplicity and reality, as to form one inseparable, uniform, and consistent narrative, evidently dictated by nature and truth?

On the most cursory perusal of the four last books of the Pentateuch, it seems most evident that the main facts (considering at present only such as were *not supernatural*) were so public, so singular, and so important, affecting in their consequences the most valuable rights and interests of every order of society, nay, almost of every individual; that we cannot suppose any man could have ventured to fabricate a false account of them, and have been successful in gaining for such a fabrication, that universal credit and permanent authority, which it has been proved the Pentateuch certainly obtained amongst the Jews from the very commencement of their state. The rapid * increase of the Jews in Egypt; the severe oppression they sustained there; the treasure cities, and other public works raised by their labours; above all, the cruel edict to destroy all their male children, in order, gradually and totally, to exterminate the nation; all these were facts, which must have been engraven on the hearts, and handed down in the traditions of every Hebrew family: nor were the † circumstances which led to their departure from the land of bondage, less public and notorious. On the first application of Moses, united with the Elders of Israel, to Pharaoh, intreating him to permit their departure, he was so incensed as to increase the severities under which they laboured, by a public order rigorously enforced throughout the land. The people complain heavily of this new grievance, many public interviews take place between the Jewish Lawgiver and the Egyptian monarch; at length the obstinacy of the latter is overcome, he not only permits the Jews to retire, but his ‡ people are eager to implore and hasten their departure. The Hebrews § demand of the Egyptians gold and silver and jewels, and the Egyptians comply with the demand; the nation emigrates in a great body: Pharaoh soon repents his having permitted them to retire, and pursues them

* Exod. i. † Ibid. v. ‡ Ibid. xii. 33.
§ Exod. xii. 35. Compare Exod. iii. 21.

with the chief force of his kingdom; the Jews notwithstanding escape, Pharaoh and his host are destroyed. * Moses, instead of leading his people the shortest way to the land which they hoped to possess, detains them † forty years, marching or encamped in the wilderness of Arabia. At the ‡ commencement of this period, he lays down a code of religious institutions and civil Laws; he builds a tabernacle of great expense and elaborate structure for divine worship, to which all the nation contributed; he sets apart a tribe for divine service, and for instructing the people in religion. At the § close of their abode in the wilderness, Moses recapitulates all the Laws which he had before delivered in detail, and appeals to the people in attestation of the different events which had befallen them. He prescribes the mode in which they should divide the land they were proceeding to conquer; ‖ they take possession of so much of it as lay east of Jordan; ¶ and before they proceed to the conquest of the rest, their legislator dies, having shortly before his death composed a popular song or hymn, * * which he "spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel, and "taught it them, that it should not be forgotten out of the "mouths of their seed, but testify against them," if they should attempt to forsake the Law and the God of their fathers.

Such is the series of facts which the four last books of the Pentateuch detail, separated from the miracles to which many of them are ascribed. Now can we believe that these facts were not true, and yet that the Jewish nation should have universally received them as such? Let it be remembered that this history does not recount the origin and growth of an infant colony, or the emigration of a savage horde, but the march of a numerous nation; for they †† "journeyed about 600,000 men, besides "women and children; and a mixed multitude went up also "with them, and flocks and herds, and very much cattle." While the magnificent structure of their tabernacle, the distribution of property, the tribe of the Levites set apart for ministers of divine worship and for public instructors, and the code of their religious and civil institutions, prove that a great de-

* Exod. xiv. † Compare Numb. xiv. 33, and Deut. i. 3.
‡ Vide Exodus and Leviticus, passim. § Vide Deut. i.
‖ Numb. xxxiii. 54. Deut. xix. 3. Compare Josh. xviii. ¶ Numb. xxxii.
* * Deut. xxxii. Compare xxxi. 21. †† Exod. xii. 37, and 38.

gree of civilization prevailed amongst the Jews at the very time when these facts were said to have taken place. Now can we believe a nation so great and so civilized were universally and palpably deceived as to a whole series of facts, so public and important as this history details?

If then the leading events of the Pentateuch were so public, so momentous, and so recent, that the history detailing them could have found no credit had it not been true; if the laws and institutions it contains were so important, and of such a singular nature, that had they not been derived from unquestioned authority they could never have been adopted; it remains to enquire how far the relation carries with it marks of truth, even in its minutest detail.

Now in this view, the first character of the Pentateuch which strikes us, is the perfect *artlessness and simplicity of its style and structure*. Writers mix fiction with truth, either to form a beautiful and engaging composition, or to gratify some particular interest or passion; in either case it is impossible but the object always uppermost in the mind of the writer should frequently discover itself to the attentive reader: if to please and interest be his design, this will appear by his selecting such circumstances as are adapted to affect the passions and impress the imagination, and by his keeping out of the way, as far as is consistent with probability, every thing tediously minute and uninteresting. We shall find sometimes the sublime and sometimes the pathetic resorted to: in a word, the design will appear in the entire structure of the work, and in the effect which is evidently intended to be produced upon the mind. It is not unimportant to remark, that had this been the object of the writer of the Pentateuch, he undoubtedly might have pursued it with considerable success. In the triumphant *hymn which he has inserted on the deliverance of the terrified Israelites from the host of Pharaoh, we discover a boldness and sublimity of composition seldom excelled. In the †address to the assembled nation, supposed to be delivered by Moses shortly before his death; in the blessings promised for obedience, and the curses denounced against offenders; and especially in the song he

* Exod. xv.

† Vide Deut. iv. to ix.; also from xxviii. to xxxiii.; particularly xxxii. and xxxiii.

taught the people, recapitulating the wonders of God's providence which they had witnessed, and the judgments they might expect; we discover a judicious selection of striking circumstances, strong imagery, pathetic appeals to the tenderest feelings, and the authoritative language of the legislator and the prophet combined so aptly, as prove the writer fully capable of commanding most powerfully the attention, and interesting the heart.

But nothing is more evident in the entire structure of the Pentateuch, than its being written without the least effort to form an elaborate and engaging history, an impressive and beautiful composition. A writer who had such a design, would have separated the history from the Laws; the former he would have related with such a selection of circumstances as would most interest and affect his reader; the latter he would have delivered in some regular system, and avoided minute detail and frequent repetitions. On the contrary, the author of the Pentateuch proceeds in such an order as was indeed most natural to a writer relating the different occurrences which took place, exactly as they took place; but which renders his work exceedingly irregular, and even tedious as a composition. The history in Exodus is perpetually interrupted with exact details of the laws as they were occasionally delivered; with minute and even tedious, though necessary descriptions of the materials and work of the tabernacle and its furniture, of the altar, the ark, the dress of the priests, and the mode of offering the sacrifices; these are detailed in the most inartificial manner, if we consider the book as intended for a finished or interesting composition. The description of the method* in which these things should be formed, is spread through near six chapters; then the history proceeds for five more; and then succeeds a relation of the fact, that each particular directed to be made was made according to the direction given, in most cases word for word the same as the direction, and this extended through five long chapters. The measures of the curtains, and the boards, and the borders; the number and size of the rings and the loops, of the tenons, and the pillars, and the sockets of the curtains and the hangings; are enumerated with such exactness, as proves the detail was not at all

* Exod. from xxv. to xxx. both included; also from xxxvi. to xl.

designed to display in strong and glowing colours the magnificence of the objects described; for such a purpose it is totally unfit, but it is exactly such as was necessary to instruct the workmen in the making of them. Now, I argue, that all this is just and natural, if Moses was really the author of Exodus, and if he detailed the circumstances at the time when they occurred; because he conceived the formation of all this work according to a particular model,* as a matter of important obligation, and worthy a peculiar record, when he tells us, † that "According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the "Children of Israel made all the work: and Moses blessed "them." But such an enumeration would have been utterly irrational and unnatural in any other writer, or for any other purpose.

Additional proofs, that the writer of the Pentateuch was careless of ornament, and attentive to objects which no mere inventor of a fiction would have thought of, and no compiler even of a true history, who designed to interest and amuse his readers, would have dwelt on, may be derived from the manner ‡ in which the rules about sacrifices, the distinctions of meats, clean and unclean, the different modes of contracting pollution, and the rules about purification, and in particular, about the symptoms and the cure of leprosy, are detailed. We must not forget that these rules continued to be observed amongst the Jews; that they are so minute, they could scarcely have been remembered distinctly for any length of time, if they had not been written; that this account of them must therefore have been published very soon after they were first observed; that many of them are so tedious and burdensome, that they would not have been submitted to, if the authority inculcating them had been at all doubtful; in short, if they had not been inculcated by the same authority which regulated the rest of that religious and civil system of which they form a part. It follows, that they were observed from the time when the Jewish Lawgiver established his code, and that they were published either by him, or immediately after him.

The frequent genealogies § which occur in the Pentateuch,

* Exod. xxv. 8, 9, & 40. † Exod. xxxix. 42 & 43.
‡ In Deut. the first twenty-three chapters.
§ Vide Numb. i. ii. & iii. and especially xxvi. & xxxiv.

form another strong presumptive proof that it was composed by a writer of a very early date, and from original materials. The genealogies of the Jewish tribes were not mere arbitrary lists of names, in which the writer might insert as many fictitious ones as he pleased, retaining only some few more conspicuous names of existing families, to preserve an appearance of their being founded in reality; but they were a complete enumeration of all the original stocks, from some one of which every family in the Jewish nation derived its origin, and in which no name was to be inserted, whose descendants or heirs did not exist in possession of the property which the original family had possessed at the first division of the promised land. The distribution of property by tribes and families proves, some such catalogue of families as we find in the Pentateuch must have existed at the very first division of the country; these must have been carefully preserved, because the property of every family was unalienable, since, if sold, it was to return to the original family at each year of Jubilee. The genealogies of the Pentateuch, if they differed from this known and authentic register, would have been immediately rejected, and with them, the whole work. They therefore impart to the entire history all the authenticity of such a public register; for surely it is not in the slightest degree probable, that the Pentateuch should ever have been received as the original record of the settlement and division of Judea, if so important a part of it as the register of the genealogies had been known to exist long before its publication, and to have been merely copied into it from pre-existing documents.

Again, we may make a similar observation on the geographical enumerations of places in the Pentateuch;* the accounts constantly given, of their deriving their names from particular events and particular persons; and on the details of marches and encampments which occur, first in the progress of the direct narrative, when only some few stations distinguished by remarkable facts are noticed, and afterwards at its close, where a regular list is given of all the stations of the Jewish camp. All this looks like reality: whenever the Pentateuch was published, it would have been immediately rejected, except the account it gives of the origin of these names, and of the series

* Vide Exod. xiv. 2. xv. 27. xvii. 7. And compare Numbers, xx. xxi. and xxxiii. xxxiv. xxxv.; also Deut. i. ii. iii.

of these marches, had been known to be true by the Jews in general; for the book states, that many of these names were adopted in consequence of these events, from the very time they took place; and it also states, that the entire nation was engaged in these marches. Now, the memory of such circumstances as these cannot long exist without writing. If the Pentateuch was not what it pretends to be, the original detail of these circumstances, it could not have been received; for, if it was published long after the events, and there was no pre-existing document of these details, which it delivers as things well known, how could it be received as true? If it was copied from a known pre-existing document, how could it be received as being itself the original? Besides, it is natural for the spectator of events to connect every circumstance with the place where they happened. An inventer of fiction would not venture upon this, as it would facilitate the detection of his falsehood; a compiler long subsequent would not trouble himself with it, except in some remarkable cases. The very natural and artless manner in which all circumstance, of this nature are introduced in the Pentateuch, increases the probability of its being the work of an eye-witness, who could introduce them with ease, while to any body else it would be extremely difficult and therefore unnatural; since it would render his work much more laborious, without making it more instructive.

All these things bespeak a writer present at the transactions, deeply interested in them, recording each object as it was suggested to his mind by facts, conscious he had such authority with the persons to whom he wrote, as to be secure of their attention, and utterly indifferent as to style or ornament, and those various arts which are employed to fix attention and engage regard; which an artful forger would probably have employed, and a compiler of even a true history would not have judged beneath his attention. Now, though it does not at all follow, that where these arts are used, falsehood must exist; yet their absence greatly increases our confidence, that we shall meet nothing but truth. When the writer has no vanity, no anxiety about the eloquence or beauty of his composition; when he writes without art, without any solicitous selection of circumstances to interest or gratify his reader; what can he design, but to instruct and inform? Must he not feel, that what he

writes is true, and therefore ought to be told, and so important, that it is sure of being attended to?

But the most decisive character of truth in any history is its IMPARTIALITY; and here the author of the Pentateuch is distinguished perhaps above every historian in the world; whether we consider the manner in which he speaks of the Hebrew patriarchs, the Jewish nation in general, or of its legislator and his nearest relations. Of the patriarchs, he speaks in such a way as not only did not gratify the vanity of his countrymen, but such as must most severely wound their national pride: he ranks some of their ancestors very high indeed, as worshippers of the true God, and observers of his will, in the midst of a world rapidly degenerating into idolatry; yet there is not one of them (Joseph perhaps excepted) of whom he does not recount many weaknesses, which a zealous partisan would have been careful to suppress; and to many he imputes great crimes, which he never attempts to palliate or disguise. In this point, the advocates of infidelity may be appealed to as judges; they dwell upon the weaknesses and crimes of the patriarchs with great triumph; let them not deny then, that the scripture account of them is impartial and true in all its points, good as well as bad; and we fear not but it will be easily proved, that, notwithstanding their weaknesses and even crimes, they were upon the whole, and considering the moral and religious state of the human mind in that age, characters not unworthy of pardon and acceptance with God, and fit instruments for the introduction of the divine dispensations.

Of the Jewish nation in general, the author of the Pentateuch speaks, it may be said, not only impartially, but even severely; he does not conceal the weakness and obscurity of their first origin, that "a Syrian ready to perish, was their fa-"ther;"* nor their long and degrading slavery in Egypt; their frequent murmurings and criminal distrust of God, notwithstanding his many interpositions in their favour; their criminal apostacy, rebellion, and resolution to return to Egypt, first, when they erected the golden calf at Mount Sinai; † and next on the return of the spies from the land of Canaan, when they were so afraid of the inhabitants, that they durst not attack them: ‡ he repeatedly reproaches the people with these crimes,

* Deut. xxvi. 5. † Exod. xxxii. ‡ Numb. xiii. & xiv.

and loads them with the epithets of stiffnecked, rebellious and idolatrous: * he inculcates upon them most emphatically, that it was not for their own righteousness that God gave them possession of the promised land: he declares to them his conviction, that in their prosperity they would again † relapse into their rebellions and idolatries, and imitate the foul vices of those nations whom God had driven out from before them for these very crimes. Here again we may appeal to the judgment of infidels; they triumph in the apostacies and crimes of the Jews, and represent them as totally unworthy the divine protection and regard: surely then they must confess, that the historian who has thus described them is strictly impartial; and that as he has concealed nothing that would disgrace, we may also be confident that he has feigned nothing to exalt his countrymen; and admitting this, we may easily shew that, notwithstanding the crimes and the stubbornness of the Jews, it was not yet unworthy of the divine wisdom to employ them as the medium of preserving the worship of the true God amidst an idolatrous world, and of preparing the way for the introduction of a pure and universal religion.

The impartiality of the author of the Pentateuch, is not less remarkable in the mode in which he speaks of the nearest relations and connexions of the Jewish Lawgiver. His brother ‡ Aaron, is related to have been engaged in the great crime of setting up the golden calf, to have joined with his sister § Miriam, in an unjustifiable attack on the authority of Moses, and to have offended God so much, that he was excluded from the promised land: and the ‖ two eldest sons of Aaron are related to have been miraculously put to death by God himself, in consequence of their violating the ritual Law. The tribe and kindred of the Lawgiver are not represented as exempt from the criminal rebellion of the Jews on the return of the twelve spies: Caleb and Joshua, who alone had opposed it, were of different tribes, one of Judah, and the other of Ephraim. In a word, nothing in the narrative of the Pentateuch exalts the character of any of the near relatives of Moses and Aaron, except only in the instance of ¶ Phinehas, the grandson

* Vide in particular Deut. ix. also Exod. xxxii.
† Vide Deut. xxxi.
‡ Exod. xxxii.
§ Numb. xii.
‖ Numb. iii. 4, and Deut. x. 6.
¶ Numb. xxv.

of Aaron; who, for his zeal in restraining and punishing the licentiousness and idolatry into which the Midianitish women had seduced his countrymen, was rewarded by the high priesthood's being made hereditary in his family. Of the family of the legislator we are told nothing, but that his * father-in-law, Jethro, was a wise man, who suggested to Moses some regulations of utility: that his † wife was an Æthiopian woman, and as such the object of contempt and opposition even to his own brother and sister; and that he had two sons, of whom, or their families, the history takes no notice, so that nothing about them is known, but that they were undistinguished from the rest of the Levitical tribe. How different is all this from the embellishments of fiction or the exaggerations of vanity. How strongly does it carry with it the appearance of humility and truth.

The most decisive proof of impartiality is, however, found in the manner in which the Pentateuch speaks of Moses himself: to point out this more clearly, let us compare it with the account which Josephus has compiled of the same facts: he, indeed, received the Pentateuch as authentic, true, and sacred; he therefore preserves all the leading events of its history, but he sometimes departs from its simple narrative, and in almost every instance of difference, we shall perceive a wish, either to adorn with fictitious splendor the character of the Jewish Lawgiver, to increase the credibility of his miracles in the eyes of the Gentiles, or to disguise and palliate the misconduct of his countrymen.

The entire account which the book of Exodus delivers of the private life of Moses, for the eighty years which preceded his divine mission to deliver the Israelites, is comprised in twenty-two verses: ‡ all is plain and artless, full of the simplicity of patriarchal life, and unmixed with a single circumstance tending to exalt the personal character of the Lawgiver, or mark him out as peculiarly fitted for so high a destiny: but one action of his maturer years is mentioned, "that he went out "unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied "an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren" (probably attempting to murder him;) "and he slew the Egyp-

* Exod. xviii. † Numb. xii. 1. ‡ Exod. ii.

"tian, and hid him in the sand." When he finds the fact discovered, and that Pharaoh sought to slay him, he flies to Midian, marries, and remains there for a long series of years, unaspiring and unknown, till at the advanced age of fourscore, the divine command urges and compels him to become the instrument of executing the will of heaven, in the deliverance of his nation.

Compare with this short and modest narrative, the embellishments which national vanity added in subsequent traditions, and which Josephus collected and adorned.* We are told that the sacred scribe of the Egyptians announces to their monarch, that about this time a child should be born to the Israelites, who would bring the Egyptian dominion low, and raise theirs; who would excel all men in virtue, and obtain a glory which would be remembered through all ages: and to the terror arising from this prediction, (of which not one word occurs in the Pentateuch) Josephus ascribes the edict to put to death all the male children of the Hebrews. Nor is this all: the birth of this future hero and legislator of the Jews, is granted to the prayers of his father, and announced to him also in a prophetic vision. Even his brother Aaron's fame, and his dignity as high priest, is also prophesied.

The original narrative, with a beautiful simplicity, notices the very natural circumstance, "that when the mother of Moses "saw he was a goodly child, she hid him three months." On this single expression, Josephus raises the most extravagant description of the distinguished and captivating stature and *beauty* of his hero, and ascribes to this, some of the most remarkable events with which he embellishes his life. His understanding too, is represented as greater than his age; the sports of his childhood are ominous of his future exploits. When arrived to maturity, he is said to have been appointed general in a war with the Æthiopians, who had reduced Egypt to the extremest distress. His good conduct and success are represented as unparalleled, and such as to excite the most violent jealousy amongst the Egyptians, and especially to raise the envy and hatred of Pharaoh; and to this Josephus ascribes his flight into the land of Midian; after which he is compelled

* Vide Josephus's Antiquities, B. II. ch. x. xi.

to adopt the narrative of the Pentateuch, which here becomes too particular, and on a subject too sacred, to allow any material deviation. Yet, even here, we find him in various minute circumstances, suppressing and softening different particulars which appeared uncreditable to Moses, but which the Pentateuch puts forward with the most faithful exactness.

When the divine glory appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and commanded him to undertake the deliverance of his countrymen, the Jewish Lawgiver displays a degree of reluctance and distrust which surprises us;* after God had wrought three different miracles, and enabled him to repeat them, Moses replies, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, "nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant: I am slow of "speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth? have not I the Lord? Now "therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee "what thou shalt say." Yet even to this gracious assurance, Moses returns almost an absolute refusal to undertake the mission on any terms: for he said, "O my Lord, send, I pray "thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." We cannot be surprised to be told, that on this, "the anger of the Lord "was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the "Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well: and I "will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth; and he shall be "thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be to thee instead "of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God:" (that is, you shall direct and authorize him to act in the name of God.) Accordingly, when the people and elders of Israel were assembled, it was Aaron† who "spake all the words which the "Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of "the people." And in every subsequent conference with Pharaoh, and the whole deliverance from Egypt, Aaron is the inseparable companion of Moses, and always acts the same subordinate, indeed, but yet necessary and important part. Now Josephus‡ softens all this into a modest apology on the part of Moses, stating his natural incompetency: "Lord, I am still in "doubt, how I, a private man, and of no abilities, should "persuade my countrymen or Pharaoh:" even this is repre-

* Vide Exodus, iv. † Exod. iv. 30.

‡ Joseph. Antiq. Book II. ch. xii. §. 2.

sented as antecedent to the miracles which Moses saw, and was enabled to perform; and not one word is said of God's anger being kindled against him, or of Aaron's being deputed to assist him; nor in the whole history is any notice taken of the important part which Aaron bore in every subsequent transaction: it is barely said, that by the command of God he met his brother, but Moses appears the sole ambassador of God to Pharaoh.

Thus again we find, on the refusal of Pharaoh to comply with the first demand of Moses to let the Hebrews go, and on his increasing their burthens, the Pentateuch represents the people as angrily reproaching Moses and Aaron: "The Lord look "upon you, and judge you; for you have made us to be "abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants, to put a "sword into their hands to slay us:" and immediately Moses as impatiently expostulates with God, "Lord, wherefore hast thou "so evil-entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent "me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he "hath done evil to his people: neither hast thou delivered thy "people at all."* Of all this, we find not one word in Josephus.

Josephus also suppresses the signal crime of the Jews in setting up the golden calf; and, above all, he omits altogether the offence which both Moses and Aaron were guilty of at Meribah, where the Pentateuch relates their being directed to bring water out of the rock; instead of doing this in the name and for the glory of God, they spoke unadvisedly, not manifesting a firm faith, or giving to God the glory of the miracle; for they gathered the congregation together before the rock, and Moses said unto them, "†Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you "water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and "smote the rock twice; and the water gushed out abundantly. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed "me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the Children of Israel; "therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land "which I have given them." This offence, so frequently alluded to in the Pentateuch, and the punishment, of which Moses is represented as repeatedly deprecating, entreating to be permitted to enter the promised land, though in vain, is totally omitted

* Exod. v. from 21 to 23. † Numb. xx. 10—12.

by Josephus. While in the original, nothing can be more affecting than the manner in which it is alluded to; it is expressed as if the heart was weighed down by sorrow for the disappointment of its fondest hope; and as if occasions of venting this sorrow were industriously sought, even a remote allusion or reference is enough; yet it concerned only himself: it was not to his credit, but it was that which he felt most deeply, and which he only could feel so truly.

Thus we clearly perceive the difference between the genuine narration of Moses himself, and the cautious compilation of a remote historian. In short, we find Josephus doing what it is natural every compiler of history should do, when describing the character of a legislator whom he looked up to with reverence, and detailing the conduct of his countrymen whom he wished to place in the best light: we find him magnifying the talents and virtues of the one, and palliating or excusing the murmurs and idolatries, the obstinacy and crimes, of the other. Now, what I contend for is this, that if the Pentateuch had been compiled by any historian guided by the mere uncontrolled feelings and partialities of the human mind, we should discover them in his describing the character of the man who is represented as the legislator and head of the nation who were the chosen people of God. I could show by a minute induction, that nothing of this kind occurs in the Pentateuch, and that multiplied instances of it are found in Josephus, who is yet admitted to be an historian of general veracity and integrity. But I forbear; I trust I have said enough to prove that the Pentateuch is written with such strict impartiality as enables us to rely on the truth of its relation, even in the most minute particulars.

I have but one further remark to make, and that is, that we find, although the subject-matter of Josephus is essentially the same with that of the Pentateuch, yet, in the selection and order of their circumstances they differ, exactly as we should expect the works of a compiler anxious to interest and keep up his reader's attention, would, whenever composed, differ from the original narrative of an eye-witness, detailing (as Moses did) every circumstance as it occurred, and totally careless of every thing but minute precision and strict fidelity.

Josephus chooses to separate the Laws from the narrative;

he says,* he will "describe the form of government which was "agreeable to the dignity and virtue of Moses: these settle- "ments, says he, are all still in writing as Moses left them; "and we shall add nothing by way of ornament, nor any thing "besides what Moses left us; only we shall so far innovate, as "to digest the several kinds of laws into a regular system; for "they were left behind him in writing as they were accidentally "scattered in their delivery, and as he, upon enquiry, learned "them from God."

Thus also we find Josephus describes minutely and elaborately the tabernacle and its furniture, and the dress of the priests;† but not like the detail of them in the Pentateuch, which is calculated to instruct the artists how to make them; while that of Josephus is calculated (as undoubtedly any man but Moses himself would have calculated it) to describe the effect of what had been made, their beauty and splendor, their connexion and use. Thus also the account which Josephus gives ‡ of the rites of purification and sacrifice, is formed to be read with ease, free from the repetitions, and from the minute, and though necessary yet sometimes unpleasant, particulars of the original detail.

All these differences, I contend, strongly illustrate and confirm the originality and the truth of the Pentateuch; and tend to prove it was the work of an eye-witness and even of an eye-witness whose business and anxious care it was to superintend and direct every circumstance of what he has described: such an eye-witness was Moses, and Moses alone. If then he was the author, can we doubt the truth of the narrative? Were not the leading facts too recent, too important, to admit of the least falsification? Is not the detail formed with such artlessness and simplicity, such particularity and minuteness, such candour and impartiality, that we cannot doubt of its truth, even in the most minute particulars? This is the conclusion I wished, in this lecture, to establish. But there is another mode of argument which seems to establish it still more decisively, which I shall adduce in the next lecture.

* Joseph. Antiq. Lib. IV. viii. § 4. † Ib. Lib. III. vi. & vii.
‡ Ib. ix. x. & xi.

LECTURE III.

The Authenticity and Truth of the four last books of the Pentateuch confirmed, by a comparison of the book of Deuteronomy with those of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers—Statement of the general argument deduced from this comparison—How far similar, how far dissimilar to that used by Archdeacon Paley, in his Horæ Paulinæ—Its application to the history, so far as it relates events not miraculous—Instanced in general coincidences between the recapitulation in Deuteronomy, and the direct narration in the preceding books—In particular facts and circumstances—As to rules of purification—Directions for carrying the tabernacle—Disposition of the tribes in camp, &c.—An apparent contradiction—How reconciled—As to the appointment of inferior judges—And of the twelve spies.

DEUTERONOMY i. 1, 3.

"These were the words which Moses spake unto all Israel, on this side Jordan in the wilderness: In the "fortieth year, in the eleventh month, Moses spake unto the Children of Israel according unto all "that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them."

THIS exordium to the book of Deuteronomy is exceedingly remarkable: it states that it is not, like the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, a direct narration or journal of the various events which occurred to the Jewish legislator and nation, from the commencement of their deliverance from Egypt; but that it was a recapitulation of every thing which Moses thought it necessary to notice, in addressing the people shortly before his death, at the close of the forty years, during which he had acted as their lawgiver and judge. I beg leave to direct my reader's attention, to this peculiar character of the last book of the Pentateuch, because it seems to me, to supply the groundwork of an argument for the genuineness and truth of the entire, somewhat different from those which I have seen generally and distinctly noticed.

In my two last Lectures, I endeavoured to collect the topics in proof of the authenticity and truth of the works ascribed to

Moses; from their general reception among the Jews; from the important and public nature of the facts they relate; from the simplicity of their style and structure; from the particularity of their narrative, natural to an eye-witness, and to an eye-witness alone; and especially from the admirable impartiality they every where display. But if the distinct nature and purpose, ascribed to the book of Deuteronomy, really belongs to it, a comparison of this, with the preceding books of the Pentateuch, ought to afford a distinct proof of the truth and authenticity of all, from the UNDESIGNED COINCIDENCES between them.

Arguments of somewhat a similar kind, have been lately applied by Archdeacon Paley,* with a force which seems unanswerable, to confirm the authenticity and truth of the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of St. Paul, by comparing them together, and pointing out the undesigned coincidence between the direct narration in the Acts, and the indirect allusions to the same facts in the Epistles; and thus establishing the truth of both, on the same principle as that by which we yield entire credit to two unsuspected witnesses, who deliver accounts of the same transactions, if it appears that neither were acquainted with the testimony of the other, and yet that their evidence exactly agrees.

An argument of precisely the same nature as this cannot be applied to confirm the truth of the Pentateuch, because we have not any cotemporary writings to compare with it; all the works of the Old Testament (the book of Job perhaps excepted) being plainly subsequent to it, all presupposing its truth, deriving from it almost every account of the facts which it details: and in almost every allusion to these facts, adapted to the narrative which the Pentateuch delivers. This circumstance proves undoubtedly that the history of the Pentateuch was received by all subsequent Jewish writers, as the only authentic account of their nation; and thus establishes its truth exactly in proportion as it is improbable the whole Hebrew people should be mistaken in receiving such a narrative as true, if it were really fictitious; an improbability which can scarcely be stated too high, if we consider the public nature and great importance of the facts which the Pentateuch details, the high authority of the person to whom

* Vide Paley's Horæ Paulinæ

it is ascribed, and the early period at which it was received. But having touched upon these topics, I now dismiss them, and proceed to enquire, whether we may not even from the internal structure of the Pentateuch, derive some arguments for its genuineness and truth; which, though not exactly the same with those of the distinguished writer to whom I have alluded, are yet somewhat of a similar nature. We cannot indeed compare the entire with cotemporary writers, and thus confirm it by the agreement of different and independent testimonies; but we can compare the different parts of it together, and weigh the coincidence between the different parts of the same testimony. We may examine whether there exists a natural and exact agreement between the direct narrative and the various references to the same facts in the recapitulation, as well with each other as with the different situations in which the supposed author is related to have been placed, and the various views and feelings which these situations would naturally suggest.

The direct narrative was written at the time of the transactions, as they were passing; the recapitulation was delivered at a period long subsequent to many. The former was intended to record all the particulars of the events, most necessary to be known; in the latter it was intended to notice only such particulars as the immediate object of the speaker, in addressing the people, rendered it expedient to impress upon their minds. In each, the laws are intermixed with the facts, and both laws and facts are referred to for different purposes and on different occasions. This gives room for comparing these statements and allusions, and judging whether they agree in such a manner as appears to result, not from the artifice which forgery or falsehood might adopt, but from the consistency of nature and truth. We may thus weigh the different testimonies of the same witness, delivered at different times and on different occasions, and judge, as it were by a cross examination, of their truth. And we may remark, that if a coincidence appears in minute and unimportant circumstances, it is therefore the more improbable it should have been designed; also, the more indirect and circuitous it is, the less obvious it would have been to a forger or compiler. If the situations in which the writer is placed, and the views with which at different times he alludes to the same facts, are different, and the terms which he employs are adapted to this differ-

ence, in an artless and natural manner, this is a strong presumption of truth. Finally, if the direct narrative, and the subsequent references and allusions appear in any instance to approach to a contradiction, and yet on closer inspection are found to agree, this very strongly confirms the absence of art, and the influence of truth and reality.

Having thus expounded the general meaning of my argument, I proceed to exemplify it by some instances, which seem sufficient for establishing the conclusion contended for.

Some presumption that the four last books of the Pentateuch were really composed by an eye-witness at the time of the transactions, arises from their describing the nation and the Lawgiver in circumstances totally different from any which ever existed before or after that peculiar period; from their adapting every incident, however unimportant, every turn of expression, however minute, to these peculiar circumstances.

The Jews are supposed to have left the land of Egypt, and not yet possessed themselves of the land of Canaan: in this interval the nation was all collected together, never before or after; it then dwelt in tents, never before or after; no one possessed any landed property or houses; no local distinctions, no local tribunal, could then exist: these and a variety of other circumstances of the same nature, necessarily attended this peculiar situation. Now such is the nature of the human mind, that though it may be easy to imagine a peculiar situation of fictitious characters, and describe their conduct in this situation with sufficient consistency, as in a poem or a fiction entirely unconnected with reality; yet, when characters that have really existed are described in circumstances entirely or even partly fictitious; when it is necessary to combine a considerable degree of truth with a certain portion of fiction; when it is necessary to describe this unprecedented and fictitious situation, not merely in general terms, but in a very minute detail of facts and regulations; to connect it with particular times and places and persons, to combine it with subsequent events which were real, and with the laws and customs which the writer himself lives under, and which prevail through an extensive nation; then, indeed, it requires no ordinary ingenuity, and no common caution, to preserve a perfect consistency; never once to suffer the constant and familiar associations which perpetually obtrude

themselves upon the mind from present experience, to creep into our language or sentiments, when we wish to describe or relate facts suitably only to past experience. Nay, admit that all this may possibly be done, it certainly can be done only by great care and art; and it is, I should conceive, next to impossible but that this care and art should somewhere or other betray itself in the turn of the narrative or the expression.

Now, an attentive perusal of the Pentateuch will, I doubt not, prove that it is written without any the least appearance of art or caution; and it is certain beyond all doubt, that its facts, sentiments and language, are adapted to the peculiarities of the situation which have been noticed. The present tense is constantly used in speaking of the facts in the wilderness: "I am the Lord, who bringeth you up, out of the land of Egypt:" the future, in speaking of any thing to be done in the land of Canaan:* "I drive out before you, the Amorite and the Canaanite: "take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inha- "bitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare "in the midst of thee. But ye shall destroy their altars. Three "times a year shall all your male children appear before me. "For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy "borders."

Thus also, it is perpetually supposed in every direction, as to public matters, that the whole congregation can be collected together at the shortest warning. We are told† of dead bodies "carried out of the camp;" of victims on particular occasions being burned without the camp:‡ this peculiarity of situation mixes itself with every circumstance of the narrative, directly and indirectly, in express terms, and by incidental allusions, and always without any appearance of art or design.

But to proceed to compare the direct narrative with the recapitulation. We may observe, that a variety of circumstances which it was natural and necessary to notice on the entrance of the Jews into the land of their inheritance, occur for the *first* time in the last address which Moses delivered to the people on the borders of Canaan: then, and not before, does the legislator speak of the "place which the Lord should choose to put his

* Exod. xxxiv. 11—13. & 23, 24. † Vide Levit. nine first chaps. also x. 5.
‡ Levit. iv. 21, and viii. 17. Numb. xix. 9.

name therein."* Then, and not before, does he add to the precepts concerning the observance of the three great feasts, that they were to be celebrated at that holy place: then, and not before, does he enjoin the Jews to bring their offerings, their sacrifices, their tithes, and the firstlings of their flocks and of their herds, to the same holy place, and not to eat them in the gates of their own cities; and if that house of the Lord should be too far from them,† to turn their offerings into money, and employ that for the celebration of the religious festivals, at the place which the Lord should choose. Now also does the legislator add to the rules relating to the Levites, that which gave them a right of‡ migrating from any other city, and joining with those who were employed in the service of God, at the place which he should choose.

Thus also in recapitulating the regulations of the civil Law, the legislator now, for the first time, introduces the§ appointment of judges and officers in the different cities which they should inhabit: and fixes the right of appealing, in difficult cases, from these judges to the High Priest and his accessors at the place which the Lord should choose; and determines what the elders of each city may finally decide on, and the manner in which they should examine the cause, as in the instances of an uncertain murder, ‖ of the rebellious son, and in the ceremony of taking or refusing the widow of a brother who had died childless. The city, the gate of the city, the elders of the city, are now perpetually introduced, never before.

We may also observe, that in this last address, when the people were going to attack the great body of their enemies, and, as they conquered them, were to inhabit their land; different circumstances are mentioned, suited to this new situation. The causes which were to excuse men's going to war are now first stated, "Having built a new house, planted a new vineyard, or "betrothed himself to a wife;"¶ all of which supposed a separation of the people from the common camp of the whole congregation, in consequence of their possessing the promised land. Now also the rules about** besieging cities, about not destroying such trees around them as were good for food, are specified

* Deut. xii. 5. † Ibid, xiv. 24. ‡ Ibid, xviii. 6.
§ Ibid, xvi. 18. xix. 11. xxi. 18. ‖ Ibid, xxi. ¶ Ibid, xx. 5, &c.
** Ibid, xx. 19.

much more minutely than before, because now sieges would be frequent. Now also Moses enlarges more frequently and more fully than he ever did before, on the fertility and excellence of the promised land:* this was natural; such a topic at an earlier period, would have increased the murmurings and the impatience of the people at being detained in the wilderness; whereas, now it encouraged them to encounter with more cheerfulness, the opposition they must meet with from the inhabitants of Canaan.

These general and obvious features of difference, which distinguish the last book of Moses from the preceding ones, when compared with the evident artlessness and simplicity of the narrative, seem to result from truth and reality alone. Such differences were natural, nay unavoidable, if these books were really composed by Moses, who was the witness of the facts, and the author of the Laws which these books contain; they would be much less likely to occur, if any other man were the author, even if he were an eye-witness; and they are totally unlike the general detail of a remote compiler, or the laboured artifice of fiction and forgery.

This general suitableness of manner in the different books of the Jewish Lawgiver, to the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, seems to supply a proof of authenticity at once natural and convincing. But there are coincidences of a less obvious nature, more circuitous and indirect, which occur in the statement of particular facts, and deserve to be accurately attended to, as supplying still more decisive characters of truth and authenticity.

In delivering rules about the *leprosy*, it is said, "When ye "be come into the land of *Canaan*, which I give to you for a "possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the "land of your possession," ye shall do thus, and thus.† I notice this instance, because that a house is spoken of, not at all with a design to mark the circumstance of their not yet being come into the land of their possession, but is of necessity introduced from the nature of the case. The subject here is the discovery and the purification of leprosy. As to this, particular directions are given with respect to a *house*, but nothing is said

* Deut. vi. 3, and 10. viii. 7. xi. 10. xv. 4. † Leviticus, xiv. 34.

of a *tent*; whereas, with regard to the impurity contracted by the presence of a dead body,* all the directions relate to a *tent*, and nothing is said of a *house*. Now, this difference is, by a little attention, easily accounted for; the writer applies the rules about the purification from a dead body, to the object then most familiar with him, a tent. And as its lying in a house would produce no effect different from its lying in a tent, and require no difference of purification, he says nothing about a house, but leaves the nature of the thing to suggest the regulation when it should become necessary. Whereas, in detailing the rules for discovering and purifying the leprosy, all the materials of which tents are made,† wool, and canvas, and leather, are particularized, as exhibiting each of them peculiar symptoms of the plague;‡ and this being done, it was unnecessary to say any thing of a tent itself; but as the materials of a house were quite different, and the appearances of infection in it peculiar, this required a particular specification. All this has the appearance of reality, and is exactly the way in which an eye-witness would have spoken; but it is such a difference as a writer of fiction would scarcely have thought of.

A similar observation may be made, on the manner in which the service of the Levites, in taking care of the tabernacle, is described.§ We find the families of the Levites enumerated, the numbers of each, and the heads of them, and which were to be entrusted with the most holy things. If it should be conceived that all this may have been inserted in a fictitious narrative, like the catalogues of Homer and Virgil, to preserve the semblance of probability, and to compliment existing families, by representing their supposed ancestors in situations of peculiar dignity; yet, how can we on such a principle, account for the exact detail which is given, not only of the arrangement of these families round the tabernacle, but the particular parts‖ of that structure, and the particular sacred vessels which each family was to carry on the march; and still more, the minuter directions given, as to the mode of taking these different parts asunder, protecting them from the injuries of the

* Numbers, xix. 14; also compare 11 and 21, which prove the rules as to a dead body, were of permanent obligation.

† Lev. xiii. 47 to 58. ‡ Ibid. 48. 59. § Numbers, iii. and iv.

‖ Numbers, iii. 25, 26, 31, 35, 36.; also Numbers, iv. particularly 15, 20.

weather during the march, carrying and setting them up? How unnatural and irrational would all this appear in the remote compiler of a general history, who lived long after these marches had ceased, when all such directions were utterly superfluous. Surely we cannot suppose that such particulars as these should proceed from any writer but an eye-witness of the events; nor even from an eye-witness, except he had been engaged as Moses was, in originally directing and constantly superintending these operations.

Different circumstances occur in the detail of these directions, which seem to supply more decisive characters of truth and authenticity; because they display coincidences more minute, or more circuitous and indirect. Thus it is mentioned, that Aaron as High Priest, and his family, had charge of the Ark of the Lord, and the furniture of the Holy of Holies; but they were to be carried, during the progress of each march, by an inferior family; and the writer remarks, these were not to approach them, until "Aaron and his sons had made an end of "covering them, at the commencement of the journey."* What forger or mere compiler would have thought of such a circumstance?

A coincidence still more remarkable on this subject, is the following. In the third and fourth chapters of Numbers, the parts of the tabernacle to be carried by each family of the Levites, on the march, are minutely specified. The fifth and sixth are taken up with a detail of Laws entirely unconnected with this subject; the seventh begins with relating, that the different princes of Israel made an offering of six covered waggons and twelve oxen, which Moses employed to carry the tabernacle, and distributed to two families of the Levites, "according to their service;"† (for the third were to carry the part assigned to them, the furniture of the Holy of Holies upon their shoulders); to one are assigned two, to another four waggons. The reason of this inequality is not specified; but on turning back, we find that the family to which the four‡ waggons are assigned, had been appointed to carry the solid, and therefore heavy parts of the tabernacle, its boards, and bars, and pillars; while that family to which the two§ waggons

* Numbers, iv. 15. † Ibid, vii. 5 to 9.
‡ Compare Numb. vii. 8, with iv. 31. § Compare Numb. vii. 7, with iv. 25.

are assigned, was appointed to carry the lighter, its curtains and coverings, its hangings and cords. Such a coincidence as this is extremely natural, if Moses, who directed this matter, recorded it; but is it not wholly improbable, a forger or compiler should think of detailing such minute particulars at all, or if he did, should detail them in such a manner as this? The more minute and apparently unimportant such coincidences as these are, the more unlikely is it they should arise from any thing but reality.

Another coincidence of somewhat a similar nature is the following. In the second chapter of the book of Numbers, the writer describes the division of the twelve tribes into four camps, the number of each tribe, and the total number in each camp. He fixes the position each was to take round the tabernacle, and the order of their march: and he directs that the tabernacle, with the camp of the Levites, should set forward between the second and third camps. * But in the tenth chapter occurs what seems at first a direct contradiction to this; for it is said,† that after the first camp had set forward, then "the "tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon, and the "sons of Merari, set forward, bearing the tabernacle; and after-"wards the second camp, or standard of the children of Reuben." But this apparent contradiction is reconciled a few verses after, when we find that though the less sacred parts of the tabernacle, the outside tent and its apparatus, set out between the first and second camp; yet the sanctuary, or Holy of Holies, with its furniture, the ark and the altar, did not set out till after the second camp, as the direction required. And the reason of the separation is assigned, that those who bore the outside tabernacle might set it up, and thus prepare for the reception of the sanctuary against it came.‡ Would a forger or compiler who lived when these marches had wholly ceased, and the Israelites had fixed in the land of their inheritance, have thought of such a circumstance as this?

In comparing the direct narrative with the recapitulation in the last book of the Pentateuch, some differences occur well worth noticing. In the eighteenth chapter of Exodus, Moses, with singular impartiality, gives the credit of originating one of the most salutary and important parts of the Jewish civil

* Numbers, ii. 17. † Numbers, x. 17. ‡ Ibid. x. 21.

government to his father-in-law, Jethro; who, observing the variety and weight of business which oppressed the legislator, from his acting as judge of every private litigation between the people, tells him, * "The thing that thou doest is not good. "Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people with "thee: this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to "perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice: Thou "shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, "and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, rulers "of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; and let "them judge the people. If thou shalt do this thing, and God "command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all "this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses "hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he "had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made "them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hun-"dreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the "people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, "but every small matter they judged themselves." Such is the direct narrative. In the very beginning of his address to the people, Moses is represented as alluding to this fact, but with this remarkable difference; that he not only says nothing of Jethro, but that, instead of representing himself as the person who selected these magistrates, he states that he had appealed to the people, and desired they should elect them. "I spake unto you "at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: "The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold, ye are "this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. (The Lord "God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many "more as ye are, and bless you as he hath promised you.) How "can I myself bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your "strife? Take you wise men, and understanding, and known "among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. "So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, "and made them heads over you. And I charged your judges at "that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, "and judge righteously between every man and his brother, "and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect "persons in judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as

* Exod. xviii. 17, &c.

"the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the "judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, "bring it unto me, and I will hear it."* There is a great and striking difference between these statements, but there is no contradiction: Jethro suggested to Moses the appointment; he, probably after consulting God, as Jethro intimates, "if God shall thus command thee," referred the matter to the people, and assigned the choice of the individuals to them; the persons thus selected he admitted to share his authority as subordinate judges. Thus the two statements are perfectly consistent. But this is not all; their difference is most natural. In first recording the event, it was natural Moses should dwell on the first cause which led to it, and pass by the appeal to the people as a subordinate and less material part of the transaction; but in addressing the people, it was natural to notice the part they themselves had in the selection of those judges, in order to conciliate their regard and obedience. How naturally also does the pious legislator in his public address, dwell on every circumstance which could improve his hearers in piety and virtue. The multitude of the people was the cause of the appointment of these judges: How beautifully is this increase of the nation turned to an argument of gratitude to God! How affectionate is the blessing with which the pious speaker interrupts the narrative, imploring God, that the multitude of his people may increase a thousand fold! How admirably does he take occasion, from mentioning the judges, to inculcate the eternal principles of justice and piety, which should control their decisions! How remote is all this from art, forgery, and imposture. Surely here, if any where, we can trace the dictates of nature, truth and piety.

A similar difference occurs between the direct narrative of the appointment of those who were sent to spy out the land of Canaan, and the manner in which Moses recapitulates this fact, when he addresses the people.† In the former it is stated, "The "Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they "may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the Chil- "dren of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a "man, every one a ruler among them. And Moses, by the "commandment of the Lord, sent them from the wilderness of

* Deut. i. 9, to the end. † Numb. xiii. xiv.

"Paran." The history then reckons up their names, and recounts the evil report which they brought up of the land which they had searched; the fatal effect it produced in exciting the congregation of Israel to rebel against their God; the consequent wrath of God, who threatened to cut off the whole nation by the pestilence, and to raise up of Moses a people greater and mightier than they. It relates at full length, the intercession of Moses to avert this dreadful doom, and its being changed into a sentence of condemnation against the adults of that generation, from twenty years old and upwards, that they should never enter into that good land, but should be detained in the wilderness for forty years, and there die. This relation takes up two long chapters: the recapitulation of this event, addressed to the children of that generation at the interval of forty years, is contained in half a chapter; yet it exhibits a view of the transactions materially different from the original narrative, yet reconcileable with that narrative, and of such a nature, that (as it seems to me) every variation may be accounted for, from the peculiar views and feelings of the Jewish legislator in this address to the people.

The recapitulation * begins with relating what took place when the people came to Kadesh Barnea, before any idea of sending spies had occurred: "Then," says Moses, "I said unto "you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which "the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord thy "God hath set the land before thee: go up, and possess it, as "the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, "neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto me, every "one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they "shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what "way we must go, and into what cities we shall come. And "the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, "one of a tribe, and they turned and came unto the valley of "Eshcol, and searched it out." Here then the legislator reminds the people of two circumstances omitted in the original narrative: one, that when they had first approached the promised land, he had commanded them to go up at once and possess the land, fearing nothing, for God was with them: the other, that

* Deut. i. from verse 19, to the end.

the idea of delaying to do this, and sending spies to search out the land, had originated, not with the legislator, but with the people; and that it was in compliance with their own request, that God had commanded Moses to appoint the spies.

This variation is extremely natural: it is not to be wondered at, that Moses should omit these circumstances in the original narrative, where he was more intent upon the final event itself, than the subordinate causes that led to it; but it was highly expedient, when addressing the people, that he should recall these circumstances to their memory, as they so strongly proved that the prime origin of this destructive event was found in their disobedience to the command of their legislator, and that they were themselves the authors of a scheme which terminated so fatally. As naturally can we account for Moses, in his recapitulation of his own conduct on this occasion, omitting altogether the menace of God, to disinherit the Jews, and raise up a nation from himself in their stead; and for his taking no notice of his own successful intercession, on which God had deigned to wave the execution of this awful menace. To dwell on a fact so disgraceful to the people whom he addressed, and so honourable to himself, would have served rather to wound the feelings and kindle the jealousy of his hearers, than to awaken them to piety and repentance, and would not have suited the character of him "who was the meekest of men;"* though, in recording the dispensations of Providence for the cool reflection of his countrymen, it was a lesson too important to be left out. And that this was the real cause of the omission here, we may be satisfied, from the singular circumstance of Moses sliding into this part of his address to the people, a fact which took place at a quite different time, but which tended to conciliate his hearers by humbling himself in their eyes, and reminding them that he, as well as their fathers, had offended God; so that like them he was condemned never to enter into the promised land. For when he states, that God swore, saying, "surely, there shall "not one of these men of this evil generation see that good "land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, save Caleb the "son of Jephunneh, because he hath wholly followed the Lord;" he adds, "Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, "saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither; but Joshua the son

* Vide Numbers, xii. 3.

"of Nun, who standeth before thee, shall go in thither; en-
"courage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it."*

The introduction of this his own rejection, and the substitution of Joshua, as the person destined by God to lead the Jews to conquer the promised land, was here peculiarly natural and useful; lest the people recollecting their former defeat, in attempting to invade that land when Moses did not accompany them, should dread a similar defeat now, when they were to be entirely deprived of him. But this awful menace of God to destroy the Jews, and raise from Moses, a nation mightier than they, is introduced on another occasion, when its introduction was indispensably necessary; when he warns that people, "Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God "hath cast out this nation before thee, saying, For my right-
"eousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land.
"Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine
"heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wicked-
"ness of these nations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out
"from before thee, and that he may perform the word which
"the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
"Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not
"this good land to possess it, for thy righteousness; for thou
"art a stiff-necked people. Remember, and forget not how
"thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness:
"from the day that thou didst depart out of Egypt, until ye
"came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the
"Lord."† To inculcate deeply this humiliating, but necessary truth, nothing was more conducive than to state to them, that the greatness of their rebellion had almost induced that God in whom they trusted, totally to disinherit and destroy them, and raise up another nation in their place; and therefore this circumstance is here noticed. ‡

It is observable, that on two occasions, the whole nation had united in rebelling against God, and determining to return into Egypt: the first, when they caused Aaron to set up the golden calf; the second, after the return of the spies from the promised land. And the direct narrative informs us, that on both occasions the divine menace against the Jews was accompanied with the same offer to Moses, to raise up from him a mightier nation

* Deut. i. 34—38. † Ibid. ix. 4—7. ‡ Ver. 14.

in their place. In reminding the people of their guilt on both these occasions, Moses mentions the great wrath of God against the Jews; but on one of them only does he notice the divine * offer so honourable to himself, while he repeatedly alludes to his offence against God, and his consequent exclusion from the promised land.

Is not all this well worth our attention? In every circumstance which the legislator adds to his original narrative, or omits from it, do we not discern the feelings of nature, and the coincidence of truth?

I might add different similar instances of such natural and undesigned coincidence; but I trust I have adduced enough to confirm my position, so far as relates to the general history of common events.

It shall be the object of my next Lecture to evince, that similar characters pervade the accounts of the miracles which the Pentateuch contains, and connect them with the common events in one uniform and consistent narrative.

* In Deut. ix. compare 14 and 25 with each other; and also Exod. xxxii. 10, and Numb. xiv. 12.

LECTURE IV.

The argument stated in the preceding Lecture applied to the narrative of miraculous events in the four last Books of the Pentateuch, in order to show that they are related with the same marks of truth as the common events—Instanced in the manner of referring to the delivery of the Law in Horeb—And to the punishment inflicted for the worship of Baal Peor—And to the delivery of the Decalogue—In the general manner of allusions to different Miracles—In the account of various Miracles wrought to punish opposition to the authority of Moses—Apparent contradiction as to the different statements of circumstances attending the punishment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—Its explanation—Inference from thence.

DEUTERONOMY, xi. 2, 7.

"Know ye this day, for I speak not with your children, which have not known and which have not "seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out "arm. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did."

THUS directly does the book of Deuteronomy purport to be the language of an eye-witness to all the miracles recorded in the preceding history of the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, addressing a nation who were also themselves eye-witnesses to the same great acts. It is on this ground, and this ground only, the legislator claims obedience to his Laws as evidently of a divine authority. If then this character really belongs to the book of Deuteronomy; if the miracles alluded to, were really performed in the sight of Moses, who thus addresses the nation, and in the sight of the entire nation which he addresses; we shall certainly be able to find in the internal structure of this address, and in the nature of the allusions it contains, some proofs of this. We shall be able to perceive in the history of the miraculous events and the allusions to them, the same exact suitableness of the sentiment and language of Moses to the situations in which he is placed; and the same natural and undesigned coincidence between the address to the people in Deu-

teronomy, and the direct narrative of the preceding books, which we have before noticed in the history of the common events, and the allusions to them. We shall perceive, that the miracles and common events cannot be separated from each other, that they are all woven into one uniform, natural and consistent narrative; that they are all mentioned with the same artlessness, the same precision and particularity, the same evident consciousness of truth.

I shall now state a few instances where the undesigned coincidence, the exact suitableness, which we have been noticing in the recital of the natural events of the history, are also observable in the relation of the miraculous facts and the allusions to them.

We may remark then, that in the direct narrative, the miracles are related minutely and circumstantially; the time, the place, the occasion of each being wrought, are exactly specified; and such circumstances are introduced, as, when considered, prove the miraculous nature of the fact, though no argument of that kind is instituted. The miracles also are related in the exact order of time when they happened, and the common and supernatural events are exhibited in one continued, and indeed, inseparable series.

Now, had the recapitulation of events been formed, for the purpose of gaining credit to a doubtful narrative of supernatural facts, we should (I presume) perceive a constant effort to dwell upon and magnify the miracles, to obviate any objections to their reality; we should find their writer accusing his countrymen of obstinate incredulity, asserting his own veracity, and appealing in proof of the facts to that veracity. But it is most evident that nothing of this appears in the book of Deuteronomy. The people are never once reproached with having doubted or disbelieved the miracles, but constantly appealed to as having seen and acknowledged them; though notwithstanding this, they did not preserve that confidence and that obedience to God, which such wonderful interpositions ought to have secured. The speaker never produces arguments to prove the miracles, but always considers them as notoriously true and unquestioned, and adduces them as decisive motives to enforce obedience to his laws. This is the only purpose for which they are introduced; and such circumstances in the history as, though not

miraculous, would show the necessity of obedience, are dwelt on as particularly as the miracles themselves.

Thus the object of the three first chapters of Deuteronomy, is to assure the people of the divine assistance in the conquest of Canaan, and to convince them of the guilt of not confiding in that assistance. For this purpose the speaker alludes to the former disobedience of the people, when forty years before they had arrived at the borders of Canaan; and mentions the miracles they had previously to that time witnessed, in general terms, merely as aggravations of their guilt. "I said unto you, dread "not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God, which "goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that "he did in Egypt before your eyes: And in the wilderness, "where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God bare thee, "as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until "ye came to this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe "the Lord your God, who went in the way before you to search "you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night to show "you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day."* He then states the denunciation of God, that all the men of that generation should be cut off, and that their little ones, whom they said should be a prey, should go in to possess the promised land. He mentions the defeat of the Jews by the Amorites, when they went up presumptuously; and shows the deep impression these events made upon the minds of their fathers; by their waiting for the divine permission before they changed their march, by their not attempting the territory of the Edomites, the Moabites, or the Amorites, because God had assigned these lands as their possessions. And he here mentions a fact *never before noticed*, but well fitted to increase the confidence of the Jews in the divine protection; even that the nations who had inhabited these countries before the children of Esau and of Lot, had been "great and many and tall," but that the Lord "had destroyed them before these nations."† He then notices the success of the Jewish arms against the kings of the Amorites and of Bashan, whom they attacked with the divine permission; and concludes with assuring them, that Joshua was appointed by God to cause them to possess the land of their inheritance. Is not this whole exhortation natural? Is not the brief inci-

* Deut. i. 29—33. † Deut. ii. 10, &c.

dental introduction of the miracles, and their being blended with other facts not miraculous, but tending to impress the same conclusion, natural? Does not the whole appear totally unlike the timidity and artifice of fiction or imposture?

It might be proved by a minute induction of every instance in which the miracles are referred to in Deuteronomy, that the allusion is naturally suggested by the nature of the topic which the legislator wishes to enforce; and that it is addressed to the people in that manner, which would be clear and forcible if they had been spectators of the miracle alluded to, and on no other supposition. Thus the whole miracle is never related, but that leading circumstance selected which suited the present subject.

When, in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, he calls on the people to keep and do the statutes and judgments which he taught them, and to teach them to their sons, and their sons' sons; his argument is derived from the solemn manner in which the people had heard them promulgated by the voice of God himself: "Especially," says he, "in the day when ye stood "before the Lord your God in Horeb; when the Lord said unto "me, Gather the people together, and I will make them hear "my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that "they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their "children. And ye came near and stood under the mountain, "and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, "with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. And the Lord "spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice "of the words, but saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice." We may ask why, of the many awful circumstances attending this dread appearance, is this of their having seen no similitude thus singled out? The next paragraph explains: "Take there-"fore good heed unto yourselves, for ye saw no manner of "similitude on the day when the Lord spake unto you in Horeb "out of the midst of the fire; lest ye corrupt yourselves, and "make you a graven image." Now here let me ask, Would it have been natural to ground this prohibition against making a graven image, not on the absurdity of it, not on the danger of its leading them to forget God, but simply on this circumstance, of their having seen no similitude when God spake to them in fire from mount Horeb? Would this, I ask, have been natural, if any doubt could have been raised on this particular fact, or if

this account had been first published when all the generation who could be supposed to witness this fact had disappeared?

Another circumstance still more remarkable occurs in this exhortation. The Midianites had seduced the Israelites to join in their idolatry to Baal Peor. The original narrative relates the manner in which this took place;* and states, that a plague from the Lord destroyed 24,000 Jews, and that it was stayed by the zeal of Phineas, in putting two of the highest rank amongst the offenders to death. The legislator, in order to deter the Jews from idolatry, alludes to this fact; but he notices no circumstance of it but one, which, though in the original narrative not stated, was infinitely the most important to advert to on this occasion; but which no persons but spectators of the fact, and perfectly acquainted with every individual concerned in it, could possibly feel the truth of. "Your eyes," says he,† "have seen what the Lord did because of Baal Peor; for‡ all "the men that followed Baal Peor, the Lord thy God hath "destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave "unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day." It was extremely natural for Moses himself to use this argument; but I confess it seems to me improbable in the extreme, that it should be used when nobody who had been witness of the fact remained alive; or if a compiler had resolved to make this assertion at hazard, and put it in the mouth of Moses, it seems very strange, that it is the only circumstance he should forget to notice in the direct narrative, and the only one he should notice in his reference to it.

I add some few instances of incidental allusions to miracles, to show how naturally they are introduced, and how exactly the manner in which they are spoken of, suits the situation of Moses himself addressing the eye-witnesses of the fact.

The Ten Commandments had been the only precepts of the Law, which God had distinctly proclaimed from mount Horeb to the assembled nation of the Jews; the rest of it had been promulgated by Moses himself, as the divine command. Now how does he argue with the people, in order to induce them to receive what he announced as the divine will, equally with that

* Numb. xxiv. † Deut. iv. 3 and 4.

‡ How decidedly does this statement justify the punishment extending to such a multitude; a circumstance so often objected to.

which God himself had directly proclaimed? He might have urged that the miracles which God had wrought by him, established his divine authority; that the Ten Commandments, being of pre-eminent importance, God had himself proclaimed them to impress them the more deeply, and chosen to employ him as the medium of conveying the rest of the Law. He might have urged the severe punishments which God had inflicted on those who had contested against his divine mission (as he does in another * passage,) and rested the point on these arguments; but he chooses a quite different ground. He states, that the people had *declined hearing the rest of the Law directly from God himself*, and had entreated that it should be conveyed to them through him. He recites the Ten Commandments, and adds, †"These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the "mount, out of the midst of the fire, and he added no more; "and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them "unto me. And ye came near unto me, even all the heads of "your tribes, and your elders; and ye said, This great fire will "consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any "more, then we shall die. Go thou near, and hear all that "the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that "the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, "and do it." Such is the ground on which Moses claims the obedience of the people to the statutes and judgments which he asserts the Lord commanded him to teach them. Now if this argument had never been used by the legislator, if the fact had never occurred, if the Pentateuch had been the invention of fancy, or even the compilation of some historian long subsequent to the events, what could lead him to clog his narrative with such a circumstance as this? In short, what but truth and reality could suggest such an argument, or gain it the slightest credit from the people to whom it was addressed?

Sometimes the allusions to the miracles are so brief, that their application to the topic which it is meant to enforce cannot be made without an intimate knowledge of the facts. Exhorting the people to love and obey God, it is said, "If ye hearken to "these judgments, the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, "and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt (which thou knowest) upon thee:"‡ commanding the people, that in the

* Deut. xi. 6. † Ibid. v. 22, &c. ‡ Deut. vii. 12 & 15.; & Exod. xv. 26.

plague of leprosy they should do according to all that the Priests and the Levites should teach them. To confirm this injuction it is added, "Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt."* Threatening the people with punishment, if they should "at all forget the Lord their God, and walk after other gods," it is said, if ye do so, "I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish."† Commanding the Jews to take care lest in their prosperity they forget their God, it is added. "God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage, and led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, where were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee. Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth."‡ And again, "Love the Lord, and keep his charge; for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and all his land; and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them, as they pursued after you, and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day; and what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession in the midst of all Israel. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did. Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day."§ Is not this brief allusion to all the miracles which God had wrought, this more full statement of two, cal-

* Compare Numbers, xii. with Deut. xiv. 9.
† Deut. viii. 19, 20.
‡ Deut. viii. 14—18.
§ Ibid. xi. 1 to 8.

culated, the one to inspire gratitude, and both to strike terror? Is not resting the credit of the facts on the persons addressed, being themselves spectators of these facts, and not merely the children of those who had been spectators; is not all this natural in Moses addressing his cotemporaries? Would it not be most unnatural in any body else, addressing the Jews at any subsequent period?

In the promises of divine assistance which Moses announces to the people, I meet with one circumstance of a very singular nature. When he encourages the people not to be afraid of the nations of Canaan, as mightier than themselves, and declares God shall deliver them unto thee, and destroy them with a mighty destruction until they be destroyed, he interposes this limitation: "I will not drive them out from before thee in one "year, lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field "multiply against thee; by little and little I will drive them "out from before thee, until thou be increased and inherit the "land."* Here is a remarkable instance of miraculous interference being extended no further than was absolutely necessary, and combined with a regard to the general analogy of nature and the regular course of Providence. Would the author of a fictitious narrative, the compiler of fugitive and uncertain traditions, have thought of such a limitation, when his whole object must have been to exalt the divine power, whose interference he described as immediate and resistless?

In the account of the return of Moses from Mount Sinai, after having received the tables of the Ten Commandments, a second time, a remarkable fact is related. "When he came "down from the mount, Moses wist not that the skin of his "face shone. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel "saw it, they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called "unto them; and till he had done speaking with them, he put "a vail on his face. But when he went in before the Lord to "speak with him, he took the vail off until he came out."† This divine splendor caught, as it were, from the near approach to the glory of the divine presence, with which the inspired legislator had just been honored, was admirably calculated to impress the Jewish people (ever strongly affected by sensible objects) with reverence for the Lawgiver and his Laws. But

* Deut. vii. 22. † Exod. xxxiv. 29, &c.

surely it was such a circumstance as no dealer in fiction, no compiler of traditions, can be supposed to have thought of. We may further remark, that this circumstance is never again alluded to, either in the direct narrative or the recapitulation in Deuteronomy; though every other fact connected with it is repeatedly noticed. Now supposing the fact true, and Moses the writer of the Pentateuch, this silence is perfectly natural; it suited not the modesty of his character, who was the meekest of men, to dwell on such a circumstance. But if any one else had been the author of the narrative, supposing so singular a fiction to have suggested itself at all, is it likely he would notice it *but once?*

One miracle, and only one, occurs in the last exhortation of Moses, to the assembled nations of the Jews, of which *no mention is made in the direct narrative.* "Thou shalt remember," says he, "all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these "forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove "thee. He suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, "(which thou knewest not) that thou mightest know that man "doth not live by bread only, but by every word that pro-"ceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." He *adds,* "Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy "foot swell these forty years;" or (as it is expressed in another subsequent passage) "I have led you forty years in the wilder-"ness; your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe "is not waxen old upon thy foot. Ye have not eaten bread, "neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might "know that I am the Lord your God."* If Moses was really the author of the Pentateuch, he could not have noticed this miracle one day before he is said to have first mentioned it, even on the border of the land of Canaan, when the Jews were just preparing to enter it, and when natural means of procuring food and raiment being afforded them, all supernatural aid in these points was to cease. Their being fed with manna, is indeed frequently mentioned, because this was a miracle which, though constantly repeated, was in each particular instance plain and distinct. But the circumstance, of the raiment of the whole nation not waxing old for forty years, was a continued supernatural operation, which at no one period could

* Deut. viii. 2—4; and xxix. 5 and 6.

have had its commencement distinctly marked; and therefore never could be noticed with such clear certainty and full effect, as when it was no longer to continue, and its cessation would arrest the attention of the most careless. Let me ask, what imaginer of fiction, what compiler of vague tales, would have thought of such a miracle at all; or, if he did, would have thought of the propriety of not mentioning it till the very close of his narration? Is not this coincidence of the matter and order of the narrative with that which would be natural if the facts were exactly true, and Moses himself the historian, and unnatural on any other supposition? Is not such coincidence a strong character of genuineness and truth?

Some of the most distinguished miracles were wrought to curb and to punish the opposition of the Jews to the commands or authority of their legislator, which some individuals occasionally raised. It is well worth remarking, that we can in every instance of this opposition discover some circumstance in the rank and situation of the individuals exciting it, which naturally accounts for their admitting more readily than others that spirit of pride and jealousy in which this opposition originated. We find Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Æthiopian woman whom he had married; and they said, "Hath the Lord spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?"* Aaron was elder brother to Moses, and when on receiving the divine command to go to Pharaoh, he had complained of his slowness of speech, Aaron was appointed by God to supply this defect, and to be his spokesman to the people. "He spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto "Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people." Through the whole history Aaron acts a part second only to Moses, and he was invested with the High Priesthood, a sacred dignity permanent and hereditary in his family; while the family of Moses had not been honoured with any hereditary dignity, but remained undistinguished from the rest of the Levitical tribe, subordinate to the High Priest. Hence it was not unnatural that Aaron should be ready to avail himself of a circumstance in the conduct of Moses, which seemed to render him unworthy of any superiority over a person so much honoured of God as the High Priest conceived himself to be. But why should

* Compare Numbers, xii. 2, with Exod. xv. 20.

LECTURE IV.

The argument stated in the preceding Lecture applied to the narrative of miraculous events in the four last Books of the Pentateuch, in order to show that they are related with the same marks of truth as the common events—Instanced in the manner of referring to the delivery of the Law in Horeb—And to the punishment inflicted for the worship of Baal Peor—And to the delivery of the Decalogue—In the general manner of allusions to different Miracles—In the account of various Miracles wrought to punish opposition to the authority of Moses—Apparent contradiction as to the different statements of circumstances attending the punishment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—Its explanation—Inference from thence.

DEUTERONOMY, xi. 2, 7.

"Know ye this day, for I speak not with your children, which have not known and which have not "seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out "arm. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did."

THUS directly does the book of Deuteronomy purport to be the language of an eye-witness to all the miracles recorded in the preceding history of the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, addressing a nation who were also themselves eye-witnesses to the same great acts. It is on this ground, and this ground only, the legislator claims obedience to his Laws as evidently of a divine authority. If then this character really belongs to the book of Deuteronomy; if the miracles alluded to, were really performed in the sight of Moses, who thus addresses the nation, and in the sight of the entire nation which he addresses; we shall certainly be able to find in the internal structure of this address, and in the nature of the allusions it contains, some proofs of this. We shall be able to perceive in the history of the miraculous events and the allusions to them, the same exact suitableness of the sentiment and language of Moses to the situations in which he is placed; and the same natural and undesigned coincidence between the address to the people in Deu-

teronomy, and the direct narrative of the preceding books, which we have before noticed in the history of the common events, and the allusions to them. We shall perceive, that the miracles and common events cannot be separated from each other, that they are all woven into one uniform, natural and consistent narrative; that they are all mentioned with the same artlessness, the same precision and particularity, the same evident consciousness of truth.

I shall now state a few instances where the undesigned coincidence, the exact suitableness, which we have been noticing in the recital of the natural events of the history, are also observable in the relation of the miraculous facts and the allusions to them.

We may remark then, that in the direct narrative, the miracles are related minutely and circumstantially; the time, the place, the occasion of each being wrought, are exactly specified; and such circumstances are introduced, as, when considered, prove the miraculous nature of the fact, though no argument of that kind is instituted. The miracles also are related in the exact order of time when they happened, and the common and supernatural events are exhibited in one continued, and indeed, inseparable series.

Now, had the recapitulation of events been formed, for the purpose of gaining credit to a doubtful narrative of supernatural facts, we should (I presume) perceive a constant effort to dwell upon and magnify the miracles, to obviate any objections to their reality; we should find their writer accusing his countrymen of obstinate incredulity, asserting his own veracity, and appealing in proof of the facts to that veracity. But it is most evident that nothing of this appears in the book of Deuteronomy. The people are never once reproached with having doubted or disbelieved the miracles, but constantly appealed to as having seen and acknowledged them; though notwithstanding this, they did not preserve that confidence and that obedience to God, which such wonderful interpositions ought to have secured. The speaker never produces arguments to prove the miracles, but always considers them as notoriously true and unquestioned, and adduces them as decisive motives to enforce obedience to his laws. This is the only purpose for which they are introduced; and such circumstances in the history as, though not

the Levites, the *next in sacredness of function*, to Aaron and his sons, and may therefore the more readily have formed a scheme to contest with Aaron his exclusive right to the High Priesthood. Dathan, Abiram, and On, were *chiefs* of the *tribe of Reuben*, the *first-born* of the sons of Jacob, and may, therefore, have conceived themselves better entitled than Moses to pre-eminence in *temporal* power. If these reasons for the conduct of both parties are natural, the silence of the narrative about them, serves only to render it the more probable, that the coincidence arises from truth, not from artifice.

A coincidence of a still more remarkable nature seems to me to occur, in comparing the narrative of the signal punishment inflicted on these rebels, with subsequent passages; which I will state in the very manner in which it struck my own mind, that it may more truly appear, whether it be overstrained and fanciful, or natural and just. On reading the direct narrative of this punishment, I conceived that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and *all their families*, were destroyed. It relates,* that "Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, took men, and rose up before "Moses, with certain of the Children of Israel. And they "gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, "and said unto them: Ye take too much upon you, seeing all "the congregation are holy, and the Lord is among them; "wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation "of the Lord?" Here they all seemed equally implicated in one common crime. In relating their punishment, it is said: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying Speak unto the congre-"gation, saying: Get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, "Dathan, and Abiram; and he spake unto the congregation, "saying: Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked "men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in "all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, "Dathan, and Abiram, on every side." Afterwards we are told, that the "ground clave asunder that was under them; "and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and "their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, "and all their goods; they, and all that appertained to them, "went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. "And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the

* Vide Numbers, the entire chapter xvi.; and compare xxvi. 9, 11.

"two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." On a cursory perusal of this narrative, I was quite certain that the tents and families of all three had been all equally destroyed. In the book of Numbers, when the names of the different families are reckoned up, on mentioning the names of Dathan and Abiram, it is said: "This is that Dathan and Abiram, who were famous "in the congregation, who strove against Moses and against "Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against "the Lord; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed "them up, together with Korah, when that company died, "what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and "they became a sign."* But I was extremely surprised to find it added: "Notwithstanding, the children of Korah died not." This seemed a direct contradiction. I returned to the original narrative, and on examination, thought I found that though it did not assert the preservation of the family of Korah, it plainly left room for implying it. Dathan and Abiram showed their rebellion in resisting the authority of Moses as temporal judge, refusing to come when called on to attend his summons: for "Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; "which said, We will not come up."† Korah's rebellion consisted in his laying claim to the High Priesthood; and the direction given for bringing his claim to a test, was, "that he and "all his company should take their censers, and put fire in them, "and lay incense thereon, and stand in the door of the taber-"nacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron;" and it is said, that "Korah gathered all the congregation against them, "unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." Here then a *separation* took place between these different parties. When indeed the divine command was given, that the congregation should separate themselves from all three, speaking of them all collectively, because involved in one common crime, it is said: "Get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Da-"than and Abiram." Yet in delivering this direction we find the separation continued: for Moses was, at the time he received it, standing at the door of the tabernacle with Korah and his company; and it is said, "Moses rose up, and went unto Da-"than and Abiram," (undoubtedly leaving Korah where he was, at the door of the tabernacle) "and the elders of Israel followed

* Numb. xxvi. 9, & 10. † Ibid. xvi. 12.

"him; and he spake unto the congregation, saying: Depart I "pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch no- "thing of theirs, lest you be consumed in their sins. So they "gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abi- "ram, on every side." Here they are united, as the people were to separate themselves from all three, as joined in a common cause. Yet they are again spoken of as still separate; for it is said: "Dathan and Abiram came out and stood in the "door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their "little children." On this circumstance turns the explanation, which seems to account for the final difference of the event. We here perceive that Dathan and Abiram collected their families round them, as their abettors in this rebellion, and as determined to abide all its consequences with themselves: but this is not said of the family of Korah, and the nature of the case shows the reason: Korah did not remain in his tent, but was at a considerable distance from it; the tabernacle being in the centre of the camp, the tents of the Levites surrounding it on every side, and outside them the tents of the other tribes: he had therefore no opportunity of collecting his children about him; he only had all the *men* of his family who supported his rebellion, along with him at the tabernacle. Now it is not said, nor is it a natural supposition, that the wives and children of Korah and his followers should in their absence assemble of themselves, and stand at the door of their tents, in the same manner as Dathan and Abiram caused their families to do; hence they escaped from being so openly and contumaciously involved in the guilt of this rebellion, and hence they escaped its punishment. The tents of Dathan and Abiram, who both belonged to the tribe of Reuben, were probably together; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up. The tent of Korah, as belonging to the tribe of the Levites, must have been remote from theirs; it displayed no such open rebellion as those of Dathan and Abiram, it therefore escaped. But Moses and the elders of Israel having quitted the door of the tabernacle, leaving there Korah and his rebellious company; at the same instant that the earth swallowed up the tents and families of Dathan and Abiram, a fire went out from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who offered up incense with Korah at their head. And when in the thirty-second verse

it is stated, that the earth swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods, it can only mean Dathan and Abiram, to whose tents only Moses is said to have gone, and against whom only he has denounced this species of punishment. The word, "appertaining "to Korah," meaning only that they belonged to his party, and supported his cause; for in the third verse after it is said, that the two hundred and fifty men who offered incense perished by a fire from the Lord, amongst whom was Korah and all the men of his family. If indeed it had been said, that Moses went to the tents of Korah, and Dathan, and Abiram, there would have been a contradiction; but he only went to those of Dathan and Abiram, and could have no occasion to go to that of Korah, having just left him and all his company at the door of the tabernacle. Thus the narrative, though it seems to approach to contradiction, yet when examined accurately, it not only escapes it, but enables us to discover how the children of Korah, and they only, came to survive the punishment which involved their parents, and the entire families of Dathan and Abiram. Such a coincidence as this, so latent and indirect, is surely a character of truth: such a narrative could scarcely have proceeded from any but the pen of an eye-witness; and what eye-witness can we suppose to have been its author, but that Moses, to whom the Jewish race have universally ascribed it, and therefore admitted it as the code of their law, and the rule of their religion, and the only true record of their history?

LECTURE V.

The common events of the Jewish history incredible if separated from the miraculous, but when combined with them, form one natural and consistent narrative—Instanced in the history of Moses before he undertook the deliverance of the Jews—In the difficulties attending that attempt, from the Jews and from the Egyptians—His conduct as leader of the emigration unaccountable, if unaided by supernatural power—At the departure from Egypt—At the Red Sea—On the return of the twelve spies from Canaan—In the detention of the Jews in the wilderness forty years.

EXODUS, v. 22, 23.

"And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil-entreated this "people? why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came unto Pharaoh to speak in thy name, "he hath evil-entreated this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all."

THIS was the expostulation of the Jewish legislator with the Deity, in the bitterness of his heart, at the severe disappointment he experienced, on his first application to the Egyptian monarch, in the name of the God of Israel, for permission to let his people go, that they might serve him.

In the three last Lectures I endeavoured to deduce presumptive proofs of the authenticity and truth of the Jewish history, from the structure of the narrative in which it is presented to us; and to show, that these proofs apply with equal clearness to the miraculous as to the common facts; both being interwoven in one detail, and related with the same characters of impartiality, artlessness and truth. This conclusion will receive great confirmation, should it be found that the common events of the history, if we attempt to separate them from the miraculous, become unnatural, improbable, and even incredible, unconnected and unaccountable; while, if combined with the miracles which attended them, the entire series is connected, natural and consistent.

In order to lead the way to this conclusion, I have directed the attention of my readers to the singular narrative from which this passage is taken; as introductory to an inquiry, Whether it appears probable or improbable, that the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, the promulgation of the Jewish Law, and the establishment of the Jewish nation in the land of Canaan, can be rationally and adequately accounted for, by unassisted human agency, using merely natural means, and taking advantage of natural occurrences? Or, whether on the contrary, the difficulties attending the accomplishment of these events, and the consequent establishment of the Hebrew polity, were not such as no mere human power could have overcome; and whether it be not indispensably necessary to admit the account which the Sacred History delivers of a divine interposition, as the only cause fully adequate, to the production of effects so important and certain, yet so extraordinary, as the deliverance of Israel, the legislation of Moses, and the settlement of the Hebrew nation in the land of Canaan? For this purpose, let us consider the objects to which this narrative naturally directs our attention; the character of the Jewish legislator, the resistance he encountered from the Egyptian government, the disposition and circumstances of the Hebrew people, and impediments which presented themselves to their settlement in the land to which they emigrated. Let us review the narrative of these events, separating the leading facts not miraculous, which form the basis of the history, from the miraculous; and consider whether it be rational to receive the former, and reject the latter.

Let us first contemplate the character and conduct of the legislator. Born at that period, when his nation groaned under the most oppressive and malignant despotism which ever crushed a people; rescued by a singular providence from that death to which he was destined by the cruel edict of Pharaoh; adopted by the daughter, and educated in the court, of that monarch; there is reason to believe, with the inspired martyr Saint Stephen, that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and that he may have been "mighty both in words and deeds:"* that is, conversant in learning, skilled in writing, and judicious in conduct; for his own positive declaration prevents us from believing him eloquent. When commanded to act as ambassador

* Acts, vii. 22.

from the God of Israel to Pharaoh, he pleads as an apology for his reluctance to undertake the dangerous task, the want of this quality so necessary for a popular leader:* And that he did not possess, or at least that he did not display, any military prowess, appears from his employing Joshua to head the Jewish troops, in the very first battle they had occasion to fight, while he stood on an eminence to secure to them divine aid, by holding up his hands to heaven.† But notwithstanding these defects, it is not improbable that, in the vigour of manhood, and the ardour of his honest indignation, at the sufferings of his people, he may have conceived the project of rousing them against their oppressors, and rescuing them from Egypt. His religious principles were shocked with the idolatry and vices of the Egyptian court, as his humanity and patriotism revolted at the cruelty exercised against his wretched countrymen. He trusted that God would assist his praiseworthy intentions, and by him accomplish the promised deliverance. "By faith," says the Apostle,‡ "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the "son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction "with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for "a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ" (the seed in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and to which he looked as the sure pledge of his nation's deliverance) "as greater "riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the "recompence of the reward." Thus animated, he seems to have attempted that deliverance he hoped for. "When he was "full forty years old," says Saint Stephen,§ "it came into his "heart, to visit his brethren the Children of Israel. And see-"ing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged "him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he sup-"posed his brethren would have understood, how that God, "by his hand, would deliver them: but they understood not." Indeed, this attempt, prematurely undertaken, and utterly unsuccessful, terminated in such a manner as seems to have banished every such idea totally from his thoughts, and to have rendered any such attempt in future, to all human judgment, desperate and impracticable. For, "the next day he "showed himself unto two of his countrymen, as they strove, "and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are.

* Exod. iv. 10. † Ibid. xvii. 8—12. ‡ Heb. xi 24—26. § Acts, vii. 23—25.

"brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? But he that did "his neighbour wrong, thrust him away, saying, Who made "thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou "killedst the Egyptian yesterday?"* "And Moses feared, and "said, Surely this thing is known. And when Pharaoh heard "this, he sought to slay him; but he fled from the face of "Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian."†

Thus exiled from his nation, his life exposed to the most imminent hazard should he presume to return to Egypt; forsaken by his countrymen, and persecuted by their enemies; he appears to have relinquished all hope of effecting their deliverance, and to have abandoned every idea of personal ambition or public enterprise. He marries, two sons are born to him, and he devotes forty years,‡ the prime and vigour of his days, to the humble and peaceful employments of rural life. His family and his flocks occupy the entire attention of the patriarch and the shepherd.

If we exclude the idea of a divine interposition, we must believe that at the end of forty years, without any outward change of circumstances, merely from a rash and sudden impulse, this exile, so long appearing to have forgotten his people, and to have been by them forgot, resumes at the age of fourscore,§ the project which, in the full vigour of manhood, and the yet unabated ardour of youthful confidence, he had been compelled to abandon as desperate. He forsakes his family and his property, revisits his nation, determined again to offer himself for their leader, and to attempt their deliverance. Yet he appears not to have cultivated in the interval, a single talent, and not to have formed a single preparation to facilitate his enterprise. Of eloquence, he confesses himself destitute; of military skill or prowess, he never made any display; he appears to have formed no party among the Jews, no alliance with any foreign power; he had certainly prepared no force.

But it will be said, he employed an engine more powerful than eloquence or arms, with an unenlightened people, who looked upon themselves as the favourites of heaven, and who long had hoped for their deliverance by a divine interposition.

* Acts, vii. 26—28. † Exod. ii. 14, 15.
‡ Compare Exod. ii. 11—23, with vii. 7, and Acts, vii. 23 and 30.
§ Exod. vii. 7.

He claimed the character of an ambassador commissioned by the God of their fathers, to free them from the bondage under which they groaned; he supported his claim by some artful deceptions and mysterious juggling, which his former acquaintance with Egyptian magic enabled him to practise; and this was sufficient to gain the faith and command the obedience of a superstitious race, always credulous, and now eager to be convinced, of what they wished to be true. Thus we may account for his success.

This might appear plausible, if the only thing wanting was to prevail on his countrymen to quit the land of bondage; but let it be remembered, that the great difficulty lay in the necessity of prevailing on the Egyptians to permit their departure.* Supposing the Hebrew slaves were willing to encounter the difficulties of emigration, and the dangers of invading a warlike nation (a point by no means certain;) yet who shall prevail on their proud and mercenary lords to suffer themselves to be deprived of their service? Every circumstance which would enable a chief to establish his party with the one, would rouse suspicion, resentment and opposition, in the other. As to forcing their way by arms, and thus vindicating their liberty, this was an attempt so hopeless and desperate, that it appears never to have been thought of. For near three hundred years had the Hebrews submitted to the yoke of servitude, without a single struggle to shake it off; above fourscore years before, the malignity of their tyrants had proposed to destroy the nation, by cutting off all their male children, yet this cruelty had excited no revolt. The operation of this dreadful edict had been some way or other eluded, and it had, in all probability, gradually ceased. But who could hope to rouse such a people, debased and dejected with long continued "bondage, in mortar "and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field,"† against one of the most vigilant and most powerful monarchies then existing in the world; by whose forces they, their wives and their children, might be immediately cut off if they attempted to unite and to resist? At all events, their aged leader

* Vide Exod. xiv. 11, Numb. xi. 5, and Numb. xiv. 3, and xx. 5, which prove clearly how ready the Jews were to return to Egypt on any reverse of fortune, and how much they regretted the plenty and peace they enjoyed there, whenever afterwards at a loss for sustenance, or menaced by war.

† Exod. i. 14.

made no such attempt; he bore no arms, but that rod by which he professed Jehovah would enable him to work miracles; and in the name of that God he applied to the Egyptian monarch, to obtain permission for his people to go and hold a feast in the wilderness.

The haughty tyrant unacquainted with the name, and despising the Majesty of Jehovah, rejected the demand with contempt. And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should "obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither "will I let Israel go." And he said, "Wherefore do ye, Moses "and Aaron, let the people from their work? get ye unto your "burdens. And Pharaoh commanded the task-masters of the "people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the "people straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and "gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks which "they made heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not "diminish aught thereof: for they be idle; therefore they cry, "saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let there be "more work laid on them that they may labour therein: and let "them not regard vain words." *

This severe command was proclaimed, and obedience to it peremptorily required: to execute it was found impracticable. But despotism roused to oprress, would not admit as an apology the impossibility of executing its will. "The officers of the "Children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's task-masters set over "them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not "fulfilled your works, your daily tasks, as when there was "straw? And the officers came and cried unto Pharaoh, say-"ing, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? But "he said, Ye are idle; therefore ye say, Let us go and do sa-"crifice unto the Lord. Go therefore now and work, for there "shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of "bricks. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the "way, as they came forth from Pharaoh, and they said unto "them, The Lord look upon you, and judge: because ye have "made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, "and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hands "to slay us." †

On this distressing accusation, Moses, dejected with disap-

* Exod. v. 2—9. † Ibid, v. 14—21.

pointment, and overpowered with the unexpected sufferings which he appeared to be instrumental in producing, poured forth his complaint before his God: he returned unto the Lord, and said, "Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil-entreated this people? "Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pha- "raoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; "neither hast thou delivered thy people at all."*

Here then is the first crisis, in which the attempt to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage seems, if we consider human means, utterly desperate. Its author is resisted and scorned by the Egyptian monarch: deserted and almost execrated by his countrymen, for involving them in new miseries, to which yet they submit without any attempt to shake off the yoke. He stands on one side, without arms, without followers, without resources of any human kind; opposed to a mighty sovereign, surrounded by his wise men and priests, his counsellors, his officers, his armies, invested with despotic power, which he is determined to exercise, in opposition to the authority of that God, whose ambassador the Jewish legislator declares himself, and in contempt of those menaces which he denounces.

Thus the claim of Moses, to a divine mission, is rejected and scorned, and he has no resource but those magical deceptions, which he is supposed to derive from his Egyptian education; but what hope of succeeding in these, when surrounded, watched and opposed by all the masters of this art by whom he himself must have been taught, the wise men and priests and magicians of Egypt, supported by the power of their state; while their opponent is without a single associate but his own brother to support or assist him?

A very short period elapses, and what is the event? No human force is exercised, not a single Israelite lifts the sword or bends the bow; but the Egyptian monarch is humbled, his people terrified, they urge the Israelites to hasten their departure. These are now honored as the masters of their late oppressors: they demand of the Egyptians, (the idea of *borrowing*, which our translation expresses, and which implies the humility of a request, and an obligation to return, is wholly foreign to the original:) "The Israelites" (in obedience to the express injunction of Jehovah) "demand of the Egyptians

* Exod. v. 22, 23.

silver, and gold, and jewels,"* as the remuneration due to their past unrequited labours, conceded by divine justice, and obtained by divine power; as the homage due to their present acknowledged superiority, and the purchase of their immediate departure. The Egyptians grant every thing; the Israelites begin their emigration: "Six hundred thousand men on foot, besides "women and children, and a mixed multitude went with them, "as well as flocks and herds, and much cattle."†

But notwithstanding this unparalleled success in his main project, the leader of this great body acknowledges himself to have acted in a mode utterly destitute of the slightest human foresight or prudence; for this multitude are so little prepared for their emigration, that they had not time so much as to leaven the bread which they brought out of Egypt; "Because "they were thrust out and could not tarry, neither had they "prepared for themselves any victual."‡ And as if in the first step to display his total neglect of every precaution which a wise leader would adopt, he is afraid of conducting them "by "the way of the land of the Philistines, though that was near, "lest they should see war, and return to Egypt;"§ yet he takes no care to guide them in such a course as would enable them to escape from pursuit, or contend to advantage with their pursuers. He leads them into a defile, with mountains on either side, and the sea in front. At this moment the Egyptians recover from the panic, under the influence of which they had consented to their departure; and they said, "Why have we "done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? And "they pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of "Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army,¶ and soon over-"took the fugitives, for they were entangled by the land, the "wilderness had shut them in."‖

Perhaps at this crisis, despair inspired them with courage: No, all is dismay and lamentation; they cried unto the Lord, and said unto Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, "hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore "hast thou thus dealt with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, "Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? for it had

* Compare Exod. iii. 22, with xii. 35. † Exod. xii. 37, 38. ‡ Ib. ver. 39.
§ Exod. xiii. 17. ¶ Ibid. xiv. 5 & 9. ‖ Ibid. xiv. 3.

" been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should " die in the wilderness." *

Here now is a second crisis, in which no human hope or help appears to sustain their leader: on one side, a regular disciplined army, assured of triumph—on the other, a rabble of women and children, and men as spiritless as they, expecting nothing but certain death, lamenting they had left their servitude, and ready to implore their masters to permit them again to be their slaves.

But if their leader had betrayed unparalleled imprudence in exposing his host to such a danger, the high strain of confidence he now speaks in, is equally unparalleled; "Fear ye not," (says he to the terrified multitude:) does he add, rouse your courage; there is no way to avoid slavery or death, but by one manly effort; turn then on your pursuers, and your God will aid you? No; his language is, " Stand ye still, and see the salvation of " the Lord, which he will show you to-day; for the Egyptians " whom you have seen to-day, you shall see them again no " more for ever; the Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold " your peace."† What would this be in any mere human leader, but the ravings of frenzy? yet, wonderful to relate, the event accords with it. The Israelites escape " by the way of " the sea;" the Egyptians perish in the same sea, we know not how or why, except we admit the miraculous interposition which divided the Red-Sea, " the waters being a wall on the " right and left hand," to let his people pass free; and when the infatuated Egyptians pursued, overwhelmed with its waves their proud and impious host.

Let us now pass by the intermediate events of a few months, and observe this people on the confines of that land, to establish themselves in which they had emigrated from Egypt. Their leader with his usual confidence of success thus addresses them: " Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, " which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord " thy God hath set the land before thee; go up, and possess it, " as the Lord of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, nei- " ther be discouraged."‡ But the people propose to adopt some precautions which human prudence would naturally dictate. " We will send men before us (say they) to mark out the land,

* Ibid. xiv. 11 and 12. † Exod. xiv. 13, 14. ‡ Deut. i. 20, 21.

"and bring us word again, by what way we must go up, and "into what cities we shall come." They are sent: they report; "The land is a good land, and fruitful; but the people be strong "that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very "great: we be not able to go up against the people, for they are "stronger than we; all the people that we saw in it are men of "of great stature; we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, "and so we were in their sight." *

At this discouraging report this timid and unwarlike race were filled with the deepest terrors: "All the congregation "lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that "night. And they murmured against Moses and Aaron; and "the whole congregation said unto them: Would to God we "had died in the land of Egypt, or would to God we had died "in the wilderness. And wherefore hath the Lord brought us "unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our "children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return "to Egypt?" In vain did Moses and Aaron fall on their faces before all the congregation; in vain did two of the chief men, who had searched out the land, and who adhered to them, represent its fertility, and endeavour to inspire the host with a pious confidence in the divine protection. So incurable was their despair, and so violent their rebellion, that they resented, as the grossest crime, the advice of these honest and spirited men: for "all the congregation bade stone them with stones "till they die." They even determine to abandon altogether the enterprize; to depose their leader in contempt of the divine authority which he claimed, to elect another captain, and return to Egypt.

At this crisis, what conduct would human prudence have dictated? No other, surely, than to soothe the multitude till this extreme panic might have time to subside; then gradually to revive their confidence, by recalling to their view the miseries of that servitude from which they had escaped, the extraordinary success which had hitherto attended their efforts, and the consequent probability of their overcoming the difficulties by which they were now dispirited; then gradually leading them from one assault, where circumstances were most likely to ensure victory, to another, till their courage was reani-

* For this entire transaction vide Numb. xiii. & xiv.

mated, and the great object of their enterprize might be again attempted with probability of success. But how strange and unparalleled is the conduct of the Jewish leader! He denounces against this whole rebellious multitude the extreme wrath of God: instead of animating them to resume their enterprize, he commands them never to resume it: instead of encouraging them to hope for success, he assures them they never shall succeed: he suffers them not to return to Egypt, yet he will not permit them to invade Canaan. He denounces to them, that they shall continue under his command; that he would march and countermarch them for forty years in the wilderness, until every one of the rebellious multitude then able to bear arms should perish there; and that then, and not till then, should their children resume the invasion of Canaan, and infallibly succeed in it. "Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the "Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: "your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; all of you, from "twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against "me. But your little ones which ye said should be a prey, "them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye "have despised. And your children shall wander forty years "in the wilderness, until your carcasses be wasted in it: I the "Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congre- "gation that are gathered together against me: in this wilder- "ness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. Joshua "and Caleb, they shall come into the land, for they had not "joined to make the congregation murmur against the Lord."

Now let me ask in seriousness and simplicity of mind, can we believe that such a denunciation as this could have been uttered by any human being, not distracted with the wildest frenzy, if it had not been dictated by the clearest divine authority; or if uttered, whether it could have been received by an entire nation, with any other sensation than that of scorn and contempt, if the manifestation of the divine power from which it proceeded, and by which alone it could be executed, had not been most certain and conspicuous? But can we be sure, it is said, that it was ever uttered? I answer, yes; because it was assuredly fulfilled; and its accomplishment forms the last particular I shall notice in the history of this unparalleled expedition, as exhibiting a fact *partly natural*; for the existence of a

whole nation in a particular country for a certain length of time, is an event of a natural kind, yet inseparably connected with a continued miraculous interposition, which if not real, no human imagination could have invented, and no human credulity believed; I mean the miraculous sustenance of the whole Jewish nation of six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, for forty years, within the compass of a barren wilderness, where a single caravan of travellers could never subsist, even marching through it by the shortest route, without having brought with them their own provisions; yet so long the host of Israel remained in it: they had first refused to obey their leader's order to invade Canaan; then when they heard the denunciation of divine vengeance, "all the people mourned greatly, "and early the next morning they rose up and said, Lo, we be "here, and we will go up to the place which the Lord hath "promised: for we have sinned." But "Moses said, Where-"fore now do you transgress the commandment of the Lord? "but it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among "you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. But they "presumed to go up unto the hill-top: nevertheless, the Ark of "the Covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of "the camp. Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites which "dwelt in that hill, came down and smote them, and discom-"fited them, even unto Hormah. *" And "they returned "and wept before the Lord; but the Lord would not hearken "unto their voice, nor give ear unto them. And yet he abode," says their leader, (recapitulating the history of this event†) "in "Kadesh (where it took place) many days. And the space in "which we came from Kadesh, until we came over the brook "Zered, was thirty-eight years; until all the generation of the "men of war were wasted from among the host, as the Lord "sware unto them." Then, and not before, was the Jewish host permitted to invade the country in which they were to settle: then, and not before, were they permitted to combat and to conquer.

In the interval they were fed with food from heaven, even with ‡ manna, until in the plains of Jericho they did eat of the corn of the land; and the manna ceased the morrow after they had eaten the old corn of the land.

* Numb. xiv. 39, &c. † Deut. i. 45, 46. & ii. 14.

‡ Vide Exod. xvi. and Josh. v. 12.

Here then I close this argument; and contend, that the existence of the Jewish nation in the wilderness for forty years, their submission during that period to the authority of their leader, without attempting either to return to Egypt or to invade Canaan, is a fact which cannot be accounted for, without admitting the uninterrupted and conspicuous interference of the power of Jehovah, miraculously sustaining and governing this his chosen people; and by consequence establishing the divine original of the Mosaic Law.

LECTURE VI.

*Admitting the authenticity of the Pentateuch, the miracles recorded in the four last books of it are unquestionably true and clearly supernatural—Leslie's four marks of certainty—Their application to the Mosaic miracles—First character, the facts public—Second, clearly supernatural—Various instances of this—Third and fourth, recorded by public monuments and commemorative rites, commencing at the time of the facts—Instanced in the tribe of Levi—The three great feasts—The entire Jewish ritual—The form of government—The distribution of property, &c.—*RECAPITULATION *and Conclusion of the* FIRST PART.

DEUTERONOMY, vi. 20, &c.

"When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, "and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then shalt thou say unto "thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a "mighty hand. And the Lord shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, "and upon all his household, before our eyes. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes."

Such was the injunction of the Jewish Lawgiver to his people. He addresses them as witnesses of the miracles wrought for their deliverance; and they were to hand down to their children the statutes and judgments of their Law, derived from the command of God, whose interposition these miracles proved. It shall be my object in this Lecture to show, that this appeal of the Jewish Lawgiver to his nation, as eye-witnesses of the miracles he had wrought, is just and conclusive; that the supernatural facts he alludes to, must certainly have taken place; the Law he established being founded on the belief of these facts, and proving their reality.

This has been a topic frequently discussed; and it would but ill suit the importance of the subject, if, in a vain affectation of novelty, I were to decline adopting the clear and decisive mode of reasoning, which Dr. Leslie has employed on this sub-

ject, in his "*Short Method with the Deists;*" which seems to me to comprise the substance of every thing material which can be adduced on this argument. I shall therefore do little more than state his mode of proof, and show the justice of its application to the Mosaic miracles.

This celebrated Author establishes the truth of the Mosaic miracles, by applying to them four rules; which, whenever they can be truly applied to any events, exclude every reasonable doubt of their reality. These rules are, first, That the facts be of such a nature, as that men's senses can clearly and fully judge of them; and in the second place, That they be performed publicly. These two rules make it impossible for any such facts to be imposed upon men at the time they are said to take place, because every man's senses would detect the imposture. The third rule is, That not only public monuments be kept up, but that some outward actions be constantly performed in memory of the facts thus publicly wrought; and the fourth, That these monuments be set up, and these actions and observances be instituted, at the very time when those events took place, and continued without interruption afterwards. These two rules render it impossible that the belief of any facts should be imposed upon the credulity of after ages, when the generation asserted to have witnessed them, has expired: for, whenever such facts come to be recounted, if not only monuments are said to remain of them, but that public actions and observances had been constantly used to commemorate them, by the nation appealed to, ever since they had taken place; the deceit must be immediately detected, by no such monuments appearing, and by the experience of every individual, who could not but know that no such actions or observances had ever been used by them, to commemorate any such events.

The part of this argument which its able author places last, even that the books containing the account of the Mosaic miracles and institutions, were written at the time of the events, and by eye-witnesses, has been, I trust, sufficiently established. We are therefore, fully prepared to examine particularly the detail of the miracles themselves, and to enquire, how far the four marks of truth which have been enumerated, can apply to them.

We may perhaps, in applying these rules to miraculous facts,

vary with propriety, the mode of expression their author has adopted, and state them to be, first, that the facts be performed publicly; and secondly, that they be of such a nature, that men's senses can certainly perceive, both that the events are real, and their origin supernatural. Now, that both these characters belong to the Mosaic miracles, is evident. That the facts were most public is undoubted; the plagues in Egypt were witnessed by the whole nation of the Jews, and felt by all the Egyptians; at the Red Sea, the Jews passed through, and saw the whole host of Pharaoh perish; for forty years were all the Jews sustained in the wilderness with food from heaven; and for "forty years their raiment waxed not old, neither did their foot swell."* Sometimes they were supplied with water from the flinty rock; and always they beheld the † cloud of the Lord upon the tabernacle by day, and the fire by night, throughout all their journeys.

At the promulgation of the Law from Mount Sinai, ‡ all the people perceived the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets, and the mountain smoking.

On the rebellion of § Korah and his company, the whole congregation were gathered together, and saw the ground cleave asunder, and swallow them up; "And all Israel," says the historian, "fled at the cry of them." And at Jordan, "the "waters stood and rose up upon an heap; and all the Israelites "passed over on dry ground in the midst of Jordan."‖

Here then were a series of facts, witnessed certainly by above two millions of souls, who remained collected in one camp, for forty years; an assembly so great probably never before or since remained collected in one body for so long a period.

If then this whole nation had not been entirely without eyes and ears, if they were not bereft of reason and sense, it was impossible that, at the time these facts were said to take place, they could have been persuaded of their existence, had they not been real. The frequent appeals to the whole nation, as eye-witnesses of them, with which the Pentateuch abounds, would have been regarded as the ravings of a lunatic, instead of being received as the solemn dictates of an inspired Lawgiver.

But though it must be impossible to have persuaded any na-

* Deut. viii. 4. † Exod. xl. 38. ‡ Ibid, xx, 18. § Numb. xvi.
‖ Joshua, iii. 16 and 17.

tion, at the time of the events, that such facts existed, if they did not exist; perhaps it may be said, They were deceived as to their miraculous nature: these supposed miracles, were either artful delusions practised on their senses, or natural, though uncommon appearances, which the superior genius and science of their legislator enabled him to persuade a barbarous multitude, were supernatural and divine.

To judge of this, let us proceed to consider the particular narrative of these facts in the Pentateuch; which we have already proved, discovers in its style * and structure, the utmost artlessness, particularity, and fairness; the most natural † coincidence between the different parts of the narrative; and the most exact suitableness of the different allusions to the facts, with the various circumstances and causes which introduce such allusions.

Now, though some ‡ few of the facts alleged in the Pentateuch as miraculous, have been the subject of objection and dispute; far the greater number are such, that, admitting them to be real, no scepticism can find a plausible pretext to question their supernatural original. In the plagues inflicted upon Egypt, it is true, that visible agents were in most instances employed, and these producing effects correspondent to their natural powers. But their introduction, their degree and their continuance, are plainly subservient to the command of the Jewish Lawgiver; and this, when it was impossible he should have any natural power to hasten, to limit, or to direct their operations. Yet that he exercised such a power, every instance proves. When he denounces to Pharaoh, that swarms of flies should infest his land; and again, that a grievous hail should lay it waste; and afterwards, that the locusts should consume it; he foretels and fixes the precise time when these judgments should take place. "To-morrow shall this sign be in the land." "To-morrow, "about this time, I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail "throughout all the land of Egypt." "To-morrow I will bring "locusts into thy coasts, and they shall cover the face of the "earth." §

And as the infliction, so also the removal, of these punish-

* Vide supra, Lect. II. † Vide Lect. III. and IV.
‡ As to the most important of these facts, vide the Appendix.
§ Exod. viii. 10, 23.—ix. 5, 18.—x. 4 and 5.

ments took place, only on the command, and according to the prediction of this delegate of divine power. "Behold," says he to Pharaoh, on his apparent repentance, "I will go out from "thee, and I will entreat the Lord, that the swarms of flies may "depart to-morrow." And again, "As soon as I am gone out "of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and "the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; "that thou mayest know, how that the earth is the Lord's."

Thus also, these plagues were unprecedented in their nature and degree. "Behold," says Moses, "to-morrow, about this "time, I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath "not been in Egypt, since the foundation thereof, until now. "Send therefore, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast "in the field; for on every man and beast which shall be found "in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come "down upon them, and they shall die. So he that feared the "Lord among the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and "his cattle flee into his house; and he that regarded it not, left "them in the field. And the hail smote throughout all the land "of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; fire "mingled with hail, very grievous, such as there was none like "it in all the land of Egypt, since it became a nation.

Thus also the locusts were such as the Egyptians had not seen;* "for they covered the face of the whole earth, and went "up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of "Egypt: very grievous; before them," says Moses, "there "were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be "such."

Still more decisively to prove that these awful punishments were under the immediate control of the God of Israel; they were not permitted to affect his chosen people, though from their nature, nothing intervened to prevent their doing so, and no human power could limit their effects. † "I, the Lord, will "sever between the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, "that no swarms of flies shall be there, to the end that thou "mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth." Thus also, the ‡ hail destroyed "every herb of the field, and "brake down every tree of the field, throughout the land of "Egypt: only in the land of Goshen, where the Children of

* Exod. x. 14. † Ibid. viii. 22. ‡ Ibid. ix. 25, 26.

"Israel dwelt, was there no hail." And again, Moses denounces to Pharaoh, "If thou refuse to let my people go, "behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in "the field: there shall be a very grievous murrain. But the "Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel, and the cattle of "Egypt, and there shall nothing die of all that is the Children's "of Israel." And still more signally in the * two last dreadful visitations, which completely subdued the Egyptians. The first, of "thick darkness throughout all the land of Egypt, so "that they saw not one another, neither rose any from his "place for three days, while all the Children of Israel had "light in their dwellings." And last of all, when "the Lord "smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-"born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne, to the first-born of "the captive in the dungeon. Of the Children of Israel there "died not one." Their doors were to be marked with the blood of the Passover; "For the Lord," says Moses, "when "he passeth through to smite the Egyptians, he will not suffer "the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you."

Of all these facts is it not most evident, that they could never have been believed at the time they were said to take place, if they had not been real; and that if real, they must have been miraculous? We see every element and every class of animated beings subservient to the command of Moses; he gives notice when they shall begin, and when they shall cease their operations; he sets them their bounds, beyond which they shall not pass; and while the raging storm and the silent pestilence sweep away thousands on every side, they presume not to touch the chosen race of Israel. The destroying angel selects from each family through the land of Egypt the single victim pointed out, and while with unerring hand, he aims at this the shaft of death, he passes over every habitation of Jacob, marked with the sign appointed by the divine command. Do we not in all this, discover the plain operation of that Being, who alone is the God of nature, and the Lord of life; whose will controls every element, and directs every event?

Nor is the same Almighty hand less conspicuous during the entire passage of the Israelites to the promised land; a nation amounting to some millions of souls, with their flocks and

* Exod. x. 22, 23, and xii. 29.

herds, are for forty years frequently supplied with water out of the flinty rock, and constantly with a regular quantity of food from heaven; and lest by the constancy and sameness of this supply, they should forget its supernatural original, they find it regularly interrupted, and even its nature altered, in conformity to the divine institution of the Sabbath. "Six days ye shall "gather the manna," says Moses,* "but on the seventh shall "be none: Gather it each day according to your eating, and "let no man leave of it till the morning." In conformity to this, they found that if on any of the first five days they gathered more than that day's consumption required, as if they distrusted the divine supply for the next day, it became putrid and unfit for use: whereas, when on the sixth day they gathered twice as much, and laid it up till the morning, it remained fresh and wholesome. And when some went out on the seventh day to gather it, they found none; and the Lord said unto Moses, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? "See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore "he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: let no "man go out of his place on the seventh day." Who can doubt whether this was miraculous?

Thus also when the Law was delivered from Mount Sinai, it was at an appointed time. It was not therefore any awful phenomenon of nature which accidentally occurred, and which the Lawgiver took advantage of, to impress his Laws on an ignorant and terrified multitude. They had full notice: for †the Lord said unto Moses, "Go unto the people, and sanctify "yourselves to-day and to-morrow, and be ready against the "third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the "sight of all the people, upon Mount Sinai." And when the appointed time arrived, this awful promulgation of the divine Law took place, with such circumstances as no human power could produce; for "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, "because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke "thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount "quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded "long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God "answered him by a voice," and delivered the ten commandments distinctly, in the hearing of the multitude. For thus

* Vide Exod. xvi. from 17 to the end. † Exod. xix. from 10 to the end.

Moses appeals to them in attestation of this fact, after reciting these commandments:* "These words the Lord spake unto all "your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of "the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice, and "he added no more."

Equally signal was the miraculous nature of the punishment inflicted on Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Had the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up without any previous notice on the part of Moses, and had this been afterwards ascribed by him to a divine interference for the punishment of his enemies, some shadow of objection might have been advanced. But what can we say, when before the event, on Korah's, Dathan's, and Abiram's resistance to the authority of Moses and Aaron, we find Moses telling Korah, "Be thou and "all thy company before the Lord, thou and they, and Aaron "to-morrow." On to-morrow they gather all the congregation unto the door of the tabernacle. On the warning of Moses, the people got up from the tents of these rebels on every side: Dathan and Abiram stand in the doors of their tents with their families, in defiance of Moses, and he pronounces this awful sentence:† "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent "me to do all these works: for I have not done them of mine "own mind. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the "earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that "appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit, "then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the "Lord. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking "all these words, the ground clave asunder that was under "them: they, and all that appertained to them, went down "alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and there "went out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hun-"dred and fifty men that offered incense." What human power could thus command the earth and the heavens to unite in executing instantaneous vengeance on those rebels, who despised that God, whose interference to secure obedience to his legislator, they had so often seen? An authority, the opposition to which was thus fearfully punished by the God of nature, was assuredly divine.

And to close this enumeration; the passage by Joshua over

* Deut. v. particularly 22, 23. † Numb. xvi. particularly 28, &c.

Jordan, was assuredly as miraculous as any of the facts which we have recounted; it was not an accidental occurrence, magnified into a miracle. * Joshua said unto the people, "Sanctify "yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among "you." And on the morrow he said, "Hereby ye shall know "that the living God is among you, and that he will without "fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, &c. Behold, "the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth "before you into Jordan. And it shall come to pass, as soon "as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the Ark of the "Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of "Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the "waters that come down from above, and they shall stand upon "an heap." To make this miracle more signal, the river was then naturally most impassable; for, says the sacred historian, "Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest. "And it came to pass, when the feet of the priests that bore "the ark, were dipped in the brim of the water, that the waters "which came down from above stood and rose up upon an "heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and "those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the "salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over "right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the Ark of "the Covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry ground in the "midst of Jordan, until all the people were passed clean over "Jordan." It requires no argument to prove this fact miraculous: it was not accidental, or it could not have been foreseen: it was not natural, for the river was at its height; and the waters that had been descending stood on an heap: it was not the effect of art, for any artifical alteratiom of the channel the people must have known; and besides, the effect would not have been instantaneous.

On the whole, may we not conclude certainly, that no such facts as these could have been imposed upon any nation, at the time they were said to have taken place; and that if they took place, they were assuredly miraculous?

Let us next consider, whether it is credible that the belief of these facts could have been introduced, at any period subsequent to the supposed time of their existence, if they had never really

* Josh. iii.

taken place. Now we assert this is impossible; because not only public monuments were preserved, but many public institutions and ceremonies were constantly performed amongst the Jews, in memory of the facts thus publicly wrought; and these monuments and observances state themselves to have been instituted, and to have commenced at the very time when these facts took place. To prove this, we must again resort to the narrative of the Pentateuch; but the proof may be brief, for the fact is notorious.

We find then many public memorials of the most signal miracles, not only in the names given to the places where they had been wrought, from the event and at the time, but in sensible objects and monuments set up at the moment the miracles had taken place, and constantly preserved with the most religious reverence. Thus the tables of stone in the ark, were a monument of the miraculous deliverance of the Law of Sinai: the vessel of manna, of the miraculous food in the wilderness: Aaron's rod that budded, and the censer of Korah and his company formed into large plates for covering the altar, were a memorial to the Children of Israel of their offence, and miraculous punishment.* The Brazen Serpent, by looking on which God ordered the people should be healed of the bites inflicted by the serpents in the wilderness, was preserved even to the days of king Hezekiah.†

Thus also twelve stones were taken out of the midst of Jordan, at the time of the miraculous passage over it, and set up by Joshua at Gilgal, as a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. How irresistible is the reasoning of Leslie‡ on this last monument: "To form our argument," says he, "let us "suppose that there never was any such thing as that passage "over Jordan; that these stones at Gilgal were set up on some "other occasion, in some after age; and then, that some de- "signing man invented this book of Joshua, and said it had "been written at that time, and gave this stonage at Gilgal for "a testimony of its truth. Would not every body say to him, "We know the stonage at Gilgal, but we never before heard

* Vide Heb. ix. 4. Exod. xvi. 33. Numb. xvii. 3. and 10, and xvi. 39.

† Vide Numb. xxi. and 2 Kings, xviii.

‡ Vide Leslie's Short Method with the Deists, p. 16, in 3d edit. Dublin, 1758.

"of this reason, nor of this book of Joshua. Where has it "been all this time; and when, and how came you, after so "many ages to find it? Besides, this book tells us, that after "this passage over Jordan, it was ordained to be taught our "children from age to age, and therefore, that they were always "to be instructed in the meaning of this monument. But we "were never taught it, nor did we ever teach our children any "such event. Thus impossible would it be to gain credit for a "fact thus circumstanced, after the period when it was supposed "to take place; and surely at the time it would be as strange "such a fact should gain credit, as that all the inhabitants of "London should be persuaded that any man had divided the "Thames, and let them pass through it at noon-day on dry ground, "the waters standing in an heap. How is it possible to suppose "such a fact, or the memorial of such a fact, should gain credit "in any age or nation, if unsupported by reality?"

But we have still stronger proofs, that the belief of the miracles on which the Jewish Law was supported, could never have been imposed upon the nation at any subsequent age, from the very nature of their religion and government, and the meaning and purport of almost all their rites and institutions. These were confessedly cotemporary with Moses, commencing at the very time the miracles are supposed to have been wrought; and were so directly and clearly commemorative of them, that it may be truly said, we have two histories of Moses and his miracles; one in the books which bear his name, the other engraved in the laws and ceremonies of the Jews; the practice of which is, as it were, a living witness, not only of the general history of the Pentateuch, but of the most signal miracles which it contains. A few instances will prove this beyond dispute.

The tribe of Levi was set apart,* not merely for the service of religion, but in memory of the miraculous destruction of the first-born in Egypt. For the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, † "Behold, I, even I, have taken the Levites from amongst the

* Vide Exod. xiii. compared with Numb. iii. & viii. particularly Numb. iii. from ver. 40 to end.

† I beg leave to call my reader's attention to one circumstance, connected with this separation of the Levites for the first-born of the Children of Israel, which (as it seems to me) it is scarcely to be conceived, any thing but reality could have suggested to the mind of any writer; or that any writer but an eye-witness of the event, would have thought of recording.

"Children of Israel, instead of all the first-born; for all the "first-born are mine: for on the day that I smote all the first- "born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto me all the first-born "in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the "Lord." And this separation of the Levites for the first-born of men, and this consecration of all the first-born of the flocks, and of the herds, as devoted to God, was not an institution for which this singular reason was arbitrarily assigned at a remote period from its original, when the true reason might be forgotten; but it was assigned at the time it took place, to be perpetually recorded as its true cause. "It shall be, saith the Lord, "when thy son asketh thee in time to come, What is this? thou "shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us "out from Egypt, and slew all the first-born in Egypt, both of

On the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, "God spake unto "Moses (Exod. xiii. 1.) saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born among "the Children of Israel, both of man and beast: it is mine." We are afterwards told, that in about fourteen months after this, "The Lord spake "unto Moses, (Numb. iii. 11.) saying, And I, behold, I have taken the Le- "vites from among the Children of Israel, instead of all the first-born "among the Children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine; be- "cause all the first-born are mine: for on that day that I smote all the first- "born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, "both man and beast: mine they shall be: I am the Lord." The importance of this general fact, in proof of the miracle thus commemorated, I have noticed in this Lecture; and this statement of the general substitution of the Levites for the first-born is, I conceive, the only circumstance which any historian, not an immediate eye-witness, would have thought of recording. But we are shortly after told, that Moses was commanded to number all the males of the Levites from a month old and upwards; and that they were found to amount to 22,000. He is then commanded to number all the first-born of the males of the Children of Israel, and to "take the Levites "instead of all the first-born among the Children of Israel, and the cattle of "the Levites instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the Children of "Israel." On thus numbering them, the first-born males of the Children of Israel were found to amount to 22,273; and we are told (Numb. iii. 46,) that the Lord commanded Moses, "For those that are to be redeemed of the "two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the first-born of the Children "of Israel, which are more than the Levites; thou shalt even take five "shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the Sanctuary shalt thou "take them (the shekel is twenty gerahs:) and thou shalt give the money "wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron, and to "his sons. And Moses took the redemption-money of them that were over "and above them that were redeemed by the Levites: of the first-born of "the Children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and "three-score and five shekels, after the shekel of the Sanctuary. And Moses "gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons, "according to the word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses." Now, on this narrative I ask, could any thing but REALITY have suggested such a circumstance? Would any but an EYE-WITNESS have recorded it?

"man and beast: therefore I sacrifice unto God all the first-born "of beasts, but the first-born of my children I redeem."*

Further, the Jewish ritual appointed three great feasts, all of which were commemorative of the miraculous deliverance from Egypt. The †Passover expressly commemorated, and every ceremony of it indelibly recorded some circumstance of that memorable night, when the destroying angel slew the first-born of Egypt, and passed over the houses of the Israelites. The month in which it took place was, from being the seventh, reckoned as the first month of the year, to mark it as the æra of this illustrious deliverance; it was eaten with bitter herbs, to remind them of their severe bondage and servile food in Egypt: with unleavened bread, because the Egyptians in their terror urged them to depart, and would not allow them time to leaven their bread, for they said, We be all dead men. It was eaten in the posture of travellers just prepared for a journey, to mark its having immediately preceded their sudden and final departure from the house of bondage.

Another great feast was that of Tabernacles, accompanied with this singular ceremony: "Ye shall take, saith the Lord, "on the first day, the boughs of goodly trees to make booths; "for all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths seven days, "that all your generations may know that I made the Children "of Egypt to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the "land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."‡

A third great feast was the feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover; to commemorate the miraculous deliverance of the Law from Mount Sinai, which took place fifty days after the destruction of the first-born, and their consequent march from Egypt, at a time of the year when the harvest usually closed; and the Law prescribed, that each head of a family should take of the first fruits of the earth, and bring it to the place which the Lord should choose, to set it down before the altar of the Lord, with this solemn acknowledgment of the whole series of peculiar and miraculous providences which the nation had experienced: "thou shalt say and speak before "the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish, was my father; "and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, "and became there a nation great and mighty and populous.

* Exod. xiii. 14 and 15. † Ibid. xii. ‡ Levit. xxiii. 40, &c.

"And the Egyptians evil-entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid "upon us hard bondage. And when we cried unto the Lord "God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on "our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression. And the "Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and "with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and "with signs and with wonders. And he hath brought us into "this place, and hath given us this land, even a land which "floweth with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have "brought the first fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast "given me." *

Thus the three great annual feasts, when all the males of the nation assembled at the house of God, were solemn commemorations of the miraculous deliverance from Egypt; of the miraculous promulgation of the Law from Sinai; and of the manifold displays of divine protection and assistance, by which the Hebrew nation were put in possession of the promised land.

But the miraculous deliverance from Egypt was not commemorated by these great feasts alone; it was assigned as one reason for the observance of the Sabbath day; it was the groundwork of the whole Jewish ritual, which was established in honour of God, who was the peculiar God of the Jews; "because "he had brought them forth from the house of bondage, from "the land of Egypt."† The observances of this ritual, its new moons and feasts, and periodical sacrifices, were all directly or indirectly commemorative of this great event which was thus recalled to the memory of the Jews, monthly, weekly, daily, while a vestige of their religion remained.

In addition to this, it must be recollected that the civil government of the Jews, the distribution and the tenure of property, and the most important regulations which affected it (about the grounds and authority of which men are always sufficiently solicitous, however indifferent they may be as to religion;) these were all founded on the belief of the Mosaic miracles, and many on a direct acknowledgment of them. Jehovah was acknowledged, not only as the God, but as the temporal King, of the Hebrew nation. Their religious and civil system were inseparably combined; God was the author of their laws, which could not be ‡ altered without consulting him. The judges and kings were his vice-

* Deut. xxvi. 5—10. † Exod. xxxiv. 23. ‡ Deut. iv. 1, 2.

roys, enjoying only a delegated authority†. The High Priests and the Levites were civil magistrates and ‡judges, as well as ministers of religion. The Sanhedrim, the princes of the congregation, the elders, the heads of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, of tens, all traced their authority to a divine appointment.§ The original distribution of property in the Jewish nation was founded on this principle, that the Lord Jehovah having been the sole power which gave them possession of the land of Canaan, each individual was to consider himself as holding his portion of it directly by a divine grant, on such tenure and under such conditions as that grant prescribed. And these conditions were many of them of such a nature, as implied a direct acknowledgment of the miraculous deliverance from Egypt, and a full conviction of a perpetual and peculiar providence over the Jewish race; a conviction which could be grounded only on the belief of these miracles. Thus the land was originally divided by the divine command; and all property alienated from any family, was to be restored to its original proprietors every fiftieth year, or year of jubilee. Mark now the reason assigned by the Law as authorizing this regulation: ‖ "The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine; "ye are strangers and sojourners with me, saith the Lord." Again, every Jew was to be released from all personal servitude every seventh year. "Then shall he depart from thee (says the "Law,) for they are my servants whom I brought forth out of "the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as bondmen."

But the most extraordinary injunction of all, with respect to property, and the most decisive on the present point, was that of the sabbatical year. "Every seventh year," says the Law, ¶ "shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the "Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vine-"yard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest, "thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine "undressed; for it is a year of rest unto the land."

We may well ask what sanction or authority could induce any nation to receive so singular an ordinance? The sanction which enforced it on the Jews was this: "If ye shall say, What shall

† Numb. xxvii. 15, &c. and Deut. xvii. 15.
‡ Deut. xvii. 8—12. § Numb. xi. 16, 17. Deut. i. 15.
‖ Lev. xxv. particularly ver. 23. 42, 55. ¶ Lev. xxv. 4 5.

" we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather
" in our increase: Then will I command my blessing upon you
" in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.
" Ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;
" and the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill,
" and dwell therein in safety. But if ye will not hearken unto
" me, and will not do all these commandments; I also will set
" my face against you, and I will bring the land into desolation,
" and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at
" it; and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw
" out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate, and
" your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as
" long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in
" your Sabbaths, wherein ye dwelt upon it.*"

How incredible is it, that any legislator would have ventured to propose such a law as this, or any people have submitted to receive it, except in consequence of the fullest conviction on both sides, that a divine authority had dictated this law, and that a peculiar Providence would constantly facilitate its execution. When this law, therefore, was proposed and received, such a conviction must have existed in both the Jewish legislator and the Jewish people. Since, then, nothing could have produced this conviction, but the experience or the belief of some such miraculous interposition as the history of the Pentateuch details, the very existence of this law is a standing monument, that when it was given the Mosaic miracles were fully believed. Now this law was coeval with the witnesses of the miracles themselves. If then the facts were so plain and public, that those who witnessed them could not have been mistaken as to their existence or miraculous nature, the reality of the Mosaic miracles is clear and undeniable.

Let me now very briefly RECAPITULATE the process of the argument which I have adduced in this series of Lectures, to establish the certainty of the Mosaic miracles, and by consequence, the divine original of the Jewish religion. The relation of them is found in a work which contains the Religion and Laws of a numerous and not uncivilized nation; and which it has been shown† they have ALWAYS RECEIVED as written by their legislator himself, at the time the facts took place, and as the

* Lev. xxv, xxvi. particularly xxvi. 34, 35. † Vide Lecture I.

only authentic code of their Religion and their Laws, as well as the only sure record of their history, and the authority fixing the tenure on which private property was held, and the regulations affecting it established. Now I think I may venture to assert, that there occurs not in the history of mankind, a single instance of any nation being so grossly imposed upon, as universally to receive a forged book of Laws, and submit to its authority not only as genuine, but divine; especially when the tenor of these Laws is such (as I endeavoured to prove) that no period can be assigned in the history of the nation, when their introduction would not have been likely to excite great opposition; and that no body of men, nay, no individual, can be pointed out, whose interest it was to form such a fabrication, or gain it that universal credit it certainly acquired, with the divided subjects of the kings of Judah and Israel, and the hostile tribes of the Jews and the Samaritans.

To give further satisfaction on this important point, and to evince that the Pentateuch was not a compilation of Laws which were indeed acknowledged, but which were combined with a fictitious history, and this implicitly received from the influence of national vanity, or party and personal interest; I have examined the INTERNAL STRUCTURE of the Pentateuch, * and from this (the most unerring criterion, whenever it can be applied) I endeavoured to evince, that the facts it relates, so far at least as they *were not miraculous*, were undoubtedly true; and that the relation it delivers may be depended on, as exact and faithful even in the most minute particulars: because it is evidently written with the most perfect artlessness and simplicity; with such particularity of time and place, and person and circumstance, as none but an eye-witness can be reasonably supposed to have preserved; and with such strict impartiality, as leaves no room to doubt that it delivers every circumstance without any attempt to disguise or alter it. The relation may therefore be depended on, as faithfully drawn up by SOME EYE-WITNESS.

In the *third* Lecture I went further, and endeavoured to prove, that as the Pentateuch had been shown to be the relation of SOME EYE-WITNESS TO THE FACTS; so also it carried internal evidence, that this eye-witness was NO OTHER THAN MOSES

* Vide Lecture II.

HIMSELF, and that it was written with the strongest regard to truth: because on comparing the different books of it together, an exact agreement appeared in the different parts of the narrative, as well with each other as with the different situations in which Moses its supposed author is placed, and the different views and feelings which would naturally arise from them; and this, discovering itself in COINCIDENCES SO MINUTE, SO LATENT, SO INDIRECT, AND EVIDENTLY UNDESIGNED, that nothing could have produced them but reality and truth, influencing the mind and directing the pen of the legislator.

Further, lest it should be imagined the common facts were indeed *related by* MOSES himself, but that the miracles may have been afterwards interpolated by some different and later hand, I endeavoured to prove in the *fourth* Lecture, that the same exact suitableness of the sentiments and language of Moses to the situations in which he was placed, the same NATURAL AND UNDESIGNED COINCIDENCES between the address to the people in Deuteronomy, and the direct narrative in the preceding books, which had been observed *as to the common facts*, were equally apparent in the manner in which the *miracles were related* and alluded to; and that the whole series of facts, common and miraculous, are blended together in one uniform and consistent narrative; all related by the same writer, and with equal artlessness, fidelity, and precision, and equal regard to nature and truth.

Having thus far pointed out the general character of the Pentateuch; having evinced that its common facts are beyond all doubt true,* as well as inseparably connected with, and DEPENDENT ON THE MIRACULOUS; and shown, that the relation of all the facts, both common and miraculous, is evidently the work of an eye-witness, bearing with it the strongest internal characters of simplicity, impartiality, and truth; also, that it is next to a certainty, that this eye-witness could be no other than Moses himself: Having thus prepared the way; I have in *this Lecture* considered the *particular detail of the miracles* recorded in the Pentateuch, and the proofs on which they depend; and it has I trust appeared, that the four (I may venture to call them) infallible marks of truth, which the acute mind of the celebrated Leslie has pointed out, clearly apply to them; that

* Vide Lecture V.

they were, in the *first place*, wrought most publicly; two nations affected by them, and above two millions of souls for forty years together witnessing them. *Next*, that they were of such a nature, that men's senses could not be mistaken, either as to the existence of the facts, or their reason deluded in ascribing to them a supernatural original. They could not therefore have gained credit in any nation at the time they were said to have taken place, if they had not been real. And if we suppose any attempt to impose them on the credulity of after ages at any subsequent period, this also has appeared impossible; because, *in the third place*, the history of these miracles states, not only that sensible monuments of many of them, were set up from the very time of the events, but that, *lastly*, outward actions and observances, public rites and institutions, had been appointed to commemorate them, commencing at the very time of their existence, and afterwards uninterruptedly continued.

In a word, it has I trust appeared, that these miracles were the foundation of the entire frame of the Hebrew polity and religion, clearly and indelibly recorded in all their rites and institutions; expressly commemorated in the three great festivals of the Jewish ritual, and recognized as the principles on which the tenure and regulations of property were founded; a point the more important, because however cold and indifferent nations sometimes become about religion, they never become careless as to property. And finally, we have observed in the Hebrew laws and ritual, a connection between the religion and government, of so close a nature, and regulations of so singular a kind, as evidently presuppose the expectation of a peculiar Providence: an expectation which could be founded on nothing but the certainty of the Mosaic miracles, and which therefore forms the strongest proof of their reality, and the most authentic record of their existence. From all this we are, I think, warranted in concluding, That the MIRACLES ASCRIBED TO THE JEWISH LAWGIVER WERE UNDOUBTEDLY REAL; AND THEREFORE HIS MISSION UNDOUBTEDLY DIVINE.

PART II.

ON THE THEOLOGICAL, MORAL AND POLITICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE MOSAIC LAW.

LECTURE I.

Theology of the Mosaic Law—General subject and arrangement of this Part—Origin, nature and effects of idolatry—Corruption of patriarchal religion—By the worship of the heavenly bodies—The elements—Deified men—Egyptian hieroglyphics introduce the worship of animals and vegetables, &c.—Connexion of idolatry with magic, &c.—Idolatry not to be checked by ordinary means—Vices attending it—Design of covenant with Abraham—Jewish scheme conducted according to the analogy of nature—Theology of the Mosaic Law—Declares the self-existence of God—His unity—His moral perfections—His providence—Such a Theology affords a strong presumptive argument of a divine revelation.

EXODUS, iii. 14, 15.

"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children "of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou "say unto the Children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God "of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my "memorial unto all generations."

In the series of Lectures which I am now called upon to deliver, it is my purpose to endeavour to illustrate and defend that part of revelation, which contains the scheme of directions and institutions promulgated from God to the Jews by the ministry of their celebrated Lawgiver.

In considering the Mosaic code as a system of religious doctrines and moral laws, it seems necessary, first, to review the doctrines which it delivers, as to the existence and attributes of God: next to develope the principles it lays down, and the precepts it inculcates, on the chief points of moral duty: thirdly,

to examine how far it supports these principles and precepts, by a suitable system of penal Laws; and by that institution of civil government, which the Jewish Lawgiver ascribes to the same divine authority from which his religious scheme originated. Having thus taken a general view of the Hebrew religion and government, we shall be prepared to estimate, on what foundation the chief objections against them rest; and whether the Mosaic institutions deserve to be slighted, as containing little more than a multitude of useless, burdensome, unmeaning ceremonies, ill calculated to promote true religion and pure morality; or to be abused as inculcating unsocial principles, and commanding or encouraging inhuman practices.

To prepare our minds for estimating justly the necessity and importance of the Jewish code, as a system of religious institutions, it is necessary to recal to our recollection the nature, extent, and effects of that gross idolatry, which had overspread the world at the time of its promulgation; since the Jewish Lawgiver states it to be one chief design of that system of religious and civil institutions, which he delivered to his nation by the appointment of God, to guard them against the infection of idolatry, and its attendant crimes; to separate unto himself a holy people, who by a steady adherence to the code of laws he had prescribed, should preserve amongst them a system of rational faith, and pure morality. "When the Lord thy God "shall cut off the nations from before thee, take heed to thyself "that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these "nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou "shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination "to the Lord which he hateth have they done unto their gods: "for even their sons and their daughters they have burned in "the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing I shall command "you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish "from it."* From this emphatic injunction, not to add to or diminish aught from the Mosaic code, it appears that every part of it had a direct and necessary connexion with its main design; and that in order to discover and to expound the purpose and the relation of its various parts, it is necessary previously to consider the origin and the nature of that idolatry, against which it was calculated to guard.

* Deut. xii. 29, &c.

That the worship of the one true God was the religion of Noah and his posterity before the dispersion of mankind, admits not a doubt. In this primitive and patriarchal religion, as incidentally disclosed by Moses, we discover the leading characters of that worship which was afterwards restored and guarded by the Jewish institutions; and which was calculated to preserve the knowledge of God, as the Creator of the world, by the observance of the Sabbath; as well as to inculcate the heinousness of sin, and typify the death of Christ, by the use of sacrifice. These simple ceremonies, together with the observance of the great rules of morality, and the prohibition of blood, in order to excite a stronger abhorrence against shedding the blood of one another, formed the entire exterior of the religion of Noah. The higher we are able to trace the history of every ancient nation, and the nearer we approach the sources of Eastern tradition, the more plain traces do we discover of this pure and simple worship; in which every father of a family acted as its priest, and assembled his progeny round the rustic altar of earth, to join in the sacrifice and the prayers he offered to the Creator and Governor of the world; to deprecate his wrath, and implore his blessing.

But the corrupt imaginations of men's hearts would not permit them to rest satisfied with a religion so pure and a ritual so simple: they looked to the sun * in its glory, they observed the moon and the stars walking in their brightness: they felt the benefits which through their influence were derived to men. They perhaps first considered them as the peculiar residence, or the chief ministers, or the most worthy representatives, of the Divinity; and in honouring and worshipping them, possibly conceived they were honouring the majesty, and fulfilling the will of their Creator: but they soon forgot the Creator whom they could not see, and gave his glory to the creature, whose existence was obvious to sense and captivating to the imagination. They seem to have conceived these luminaries to be

* Vide Job, xxxi. 26, 27. Deut. iv. 19. Wisdom of Sol. xiii. 2, 3. Maimonides de Idololatria, the five first chapters. Diod. Siculus, Lib. 1. cap. i. Euseb. Præpar. Evang. Lib. 1. cap. ix. Herodotus, Clio, cap. cxxxi. Plato in Cratylus, p. 397.—Vide also Banier's Mythology, Book III. ch. iii. Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Part I. ch. iii. And Bryant's Analys. of Mythology, who affirms, the gods of Greece were originally one god, the sun. Vol. I. 305.

moved and animated by distinct and independent spirits,* and therefore fit objects of immediate worship. To represent them in their absence, they erected pillars and statues on the tops of hills and mountains, or on pyramids and high buildings, raised for the purpose;† as if they could thus approach nearer the presence of their divinities. They set apart priests, and appointed times and sacrifices suited to the luminary they adored; hence the rising and the setting sun, the different seasons of the year, the new and full moon, the quarters of the heavens, the constellations and conjunctions of the stars, acquired a peculiar sacredness, and were conceived to possess a peculiar influence. It now became the interest of the priests to persuade men, that the ‡ pillars and statues set up as representatives of the host of heaven, partook themselves of the same spirit, and communicated the same influence, as the sacred objects which they represented. Thus degraded man bowed down to the senseless image which he had himself set up, and forgot "that there was a lie in his right hand."§

From similar principles,‖ other men adopted different objects of worship; light and air, wind and fire, seemed to them active spirits, by whose beneficent energy all the operations of nature were conducted and controlled. Water and earth¶ formed the universal parents, from which all things derived their origin, and to which they were still indebted for their sustenance. Thus these also became the objects, first of gratitude and admiration, next of awe and reverence. They also had their temples and emblematic images, their priests and worshippers.

But the folly of idolatry did not stop here. Not satisfied with adoring the host of heaven and the elements of nature, as the beneficent instruments of blessing; human weakness led man, first to tremble with horror, and then to bow down with a base and grovelling superstition to objects of an opposite nature, to

* Cicero de Natura Deorum, Lib. II. cap. xv. to xxiii.

† Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xxix. p. 423. Winder's History of Knowledge, Vol. I. cap. xii. sect. 3.

‡ Maimonides ut supra. Herodot. Clio, cap. xiii.; and as to the use of mountains by the Persians, Ibid.

§ Isaiah, xliv. 20.

‖ Wisdom, xiii. 2. Herod. Clio, cap. cxxx. Cicero de Natura Deorum, Lib. II. cap. xxviii. Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 24, 25.

¶ Cicero de Natura Deorum, Lib. I. cap. x.

every thing which seemed gloomy and malignant. The * mixture of good and evil in the world, suggested the idea of an evil principle, independent of and at war with the good, which it was necessary to soothe and conciliate. Darkness, storm and pestilence, the fates, the furies, and a multitude of similar objects, were honoured with a heart-debasing homage, by their terrified and trembling votaries. Nor was this yet the worst:† Gratitude to the inventor of useful arts, to the wise legislator, to the brave defender of his country, combined with the vanity of kings, the pride of conquerors, and even private affection and fond regret for the parent, the child, the consort, the friend, led men first to erect monuments to the memory of the dead, and then to worship them as divine. They sometimes transferred to these their fellow-creatures, the names of the luminaries and elements of nature, whose utility and beneficence they conceived were thus best represented. Hence, in process of time, arose a ‡ communication of attributes and honours, of priests and worshippers; and to close the degrading catalogue of idolatrous absurdities, and verify St. Paul's assertion, that "professing "themselves to be wise they became fools;" Egypt,§ the chief seat of ancient wisdom and policy, of arts and letters, introduced objects of worship, still more grovelling and base than any which had preceded. In some instances, the policy of its kings led them to encourage the preservation of those animals, whose labours they employed in cultivating the earth, or whose useful activity they saw exerted in destroying the venomous reptiles and destructive animals by which they were infested. For this

* Vide Vossius de Idololatria, Lib. I. cap. v. Vossius however imputes, as appears to me, a much greater antiquity to this species of idolatry, than the testimony of history warrants. Vide the authorities quoted in the note, p. 106.

† Cicero de Natura Deorum, Lib. II. cap. xxiv. Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Part I. ch. iv.

‡ Warb. Div. Leg. B. II. sect. vi.

§ Vide Selden de Diis Syris. Prologomena, cap. iii. p. 53; and Bryant's Analys. of Mythology, Vol. I. p. 331, &c. Warburton's Divine Legat. B. IV. sect. iv. Vol. III. p. 197. Cicero de Natura Deorum, Lib. I. sect. xxxvi. Cudworth's Intellectual System, ch. iv. sect. xviii. This last learned writer maintains, that the Pagans generally acknowledged one supreme Deity. Admitting, however, his proofs to have all the force he himself attributes to them, they in no degree contradict the wide extent or practical mischiefs of idolatry, or the importance and necessity of a divine Revelation to counteract them; for, speaking of the difference which he supposes the Pagans generally to have made between the one supreme unmade Deity and their

purpose, they sanctified them as emblematic of some divinity, or even worshipped them as in themselves divine; while, on the other hand, the Egyptian priests, with an affectation of mysterious wisdom, expressed the attributes of God, the operations of the elements, the motions and influences of the heavenly bodies, the rising and falling of the Nile and its effects, by symbolic representations derived from the known and familiar properties of animals and even vegetables. Hence these became, first, representations of their divinities, and afterwards the direct objects of divine reverence. Thus man was taught to bow down to birds and beasts and creeping things, to plants and herbs, to stocks and stones. Nothing was too base for grovelling superstition to adore; the heavens, the earth, the air, the sea, each hill, each river, each wood, was peopled with imaginary deities; every nation, every city, every family, had its peculiar guardian gods. The name and reverence of the Supreme Father of the universe was banished from the earth; or, if remembered at all, men scrupled not to associate with him their basest idols; and deeming him too exalted and remote to regard human affairs, they looked to these idols as the immediate authors of evil and of good; they judged of their power, by comparing the degrees of prosperity their worshippers enjoyed. Was one nation or family more successful than another, their guardian gods were adopted by their rivals; and every day extended more widely this intercommunity of folly and of blasphemy.

Connected with this worship was the opinion of the power of

other inferior 'generated gods, he adds, "We are the rather concerned to "make out this difference, because it is notorious that they did many times "also confound them together; attributing the government of the whole "world to the gods promiscuously, and without putting any due discrimi-"nation between the supreme and inferior. The true reason whereof "seems to have been this; because they supposed the supreme God not to "do all immediately in the government of the world, but to permit much to "his inferior ministers: one instance of which we had in Ovid, and innumera-"ble such others might be cited out of their most sober writers." Cudworth further grants, "That the same names were used to express, some-"times the supreme God, sometimes the parts of nature, sometimes an hero "or deified man." Vide Cudworth, p. 255. Amidst this confusion, the difference occasionally acknowledged by speculative men, to exist between the Supreme Intelligence, and the subordinate but more immediate agents in the government of the world, could produce no practical effect in checking the contagion of idolatry and its attendant crimes, and rather served to aggravate the guilt of those, who "knowing God, honoured him not as God," than to enlighten or reform mankind.

magic,* or the arts to which the priests pretended, of discovering and even directing the effects ascribed to the operations of the elements,† the conjunctions of the stars, the influence of lucky and unlucky days, the power of invisible spirits, and the rabble of their idol gods. Connected with idolatry also was the trade of oracles and augurs, of diviners and soothsayers; to whom the dupes of heathen priestcraft resorted, to calm their fears of futurity, and direct their conduct in every enterprise of doubt or hazard; while the babble of wretches distracted with fanaticism, or convulsed with intoxicating vapours, the flight and chattering of birds, the recollection of fleeting dreams, the inspection of entrails, and a thousand other modes equally capricious and absurd, were used by impostors, to blind and cheat their followers.

Thus impious and absurd was the whole system of idolatry; yet was it so extensive and deeply rooted, as to seem utterly incapable of being checked or reformed by any of the ordinary dispensations of Providence. There is reason to believe, that before the dispersion of mankind, a great part of them had apostatized from the worship of the one true God, and, struck perhaps with the influence of the air and of the winds, in remedying the effects of the deluge, had commenced the structure of the tower of Babel; not with the wild conceit of raising it till its top should reach to heaven, but that its top should be sacred to the heavens,‡ the common temple of worship, and centre of their idolatrous union; and it is probable that their dispersion was designed to defeat this impious design, by confounding not only their languages, but still more their idolatrous creed, and rendering their universal combination, in this base apostacy, impracticable and transient. But however this may be, it is certain that in the five centuries which elapsed from the birth of Abraham, to the mission of Moses, idolatry had infected every part of the world, of which any records can be

* Vide, for a full account of this subject, Banier's History of Mythology, Lib. IV.; and on the whole of this subject of idolatry, Leland's very useful work on the Advantage and Necessity of Revelation, Part. I. ch. iii. iv. v. vi. vii.

† Vide Stanleii Historia Philosophiæ Orientalis, cum notis Clerici, Lib. I. ch. xvi. xvii.; and from ch. xxiii. to the end of the first Book.

‡ Vide Hutchinson's Works, i. 28, or the Abridgment of them by Duncan Forbes, in a Letter to a Bishop, p. 30 of his Works.

traced: it had been carried to the fullest extent of mischievous and absurd impiety by the Egyptians, the wisest and most celebrated nation of the then civilized globe: it had totally corrupted the Assyrians, and above all the Canaanites, who were the most warlike nations of the earth; as well as the Phœnicians, who conducted the commerce of the world, and who diffused it wherever they extended their traffic, or planted their colonies.

Unhappily indeed experience proves, that the progress of reason and science has ever been totally ineffectual in checking the progress of idolatry. The order and beauty of the heavens; the grateful vicissitudes of days, and nights, and seasons; the fertility of the earth; all these, the more they were contemplated, instead of raising men's thoughts to the great first Cause, only rivetted more deeply the admiration and the idolatry which were paid to the host of heaven, and the elements of nature.* The ordinary judgments of God, famine and earthquake, sword and pestilence, were ascribed to the influence of the invisible and malignant powers and spirits, whom fear had created, and superstition adored. Pride and policy, gratitude and affection, daily added to the number of deified men: the whole system of paganism was defended by kings and legislators, who employed it as an engine of government, and derived from it sacredness and dignity; as well as by priests and divines, who relied on it for subsistence. While to the great mass of the people it presented temples and statues, pomps and festivals, to interest the imagination, and gratify the sense; it raised their curiosity, by the hope of prying into futurity; it employed the influence of magical arts and malignant powers, to work upon their fears; while it interested their private partialities and prejudices, by local, national, and even family gods. But above all, idolatry recommended itself to degraded and corrupted man, by indulging and almost consecrating every licentious passion, and every vicious propensity of the human heart.

We have seen how man, who had been formed after the image of his Creator—man, who bore that sacred image stamped upon his soul in the bright characters of reason, truth, and virtue—forgot that Creator, and, stooping from his high original, degraded that sacred image, by bowing down to his fellow-

* For a remarkable instance, vide Jer. xliv. 17.

creature, and blasphemously deifying his fellow man. Thus reason, and truth, and virtue seemed to vanish from his nature; folly, and error, and vice to triumph in their stead. When men were exalted into gods, every the basest passion and the foulest vice found an example to justify, and a patron to protect it.* Gods, whose characters and actions had been impure, revengeful, and cruel, were honored by adopting, as parts of their worship, impurity, cruelty, and bloodshed. Demons, who were worshipped, not from love but fear, not because beneficent but malignant, it was naturally supposed could be appeased or conciliated, only by the suppliant inflicting sufferings and death, even on the object whom he held most dear. Hence "every "abomination to the Lord which he hateth did the heathens do "unto their gods:" so that "even their sons and their daugh- "ters did they burn in the fire to their gods."† In truth, we know from other sources than the Scripture, that theft, bloodshed, and cruelty, that incest, adultery, and unnatural crimes, were sanctioned by the example of the heathen gods, and even consecrated as parts of their worship: we know that every species of lewdness was practised in the temples of some, and that ‡ human sacrifices bleed upon the altars of others, and this in the most polished and celebrated nations of antiquity;

* Vide Lucian passim—Hesiod, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles passim—Ovid, Terence, &c. &c.—Cicero de Nat. Deorum, Lib. I. cap. xvi. Vide also Tertullian's Apology, ch. ii. 10. 15. Augustine de Civitate Dei passim. The Octavius of Minutius Felix, especially sect. xx. to xxx. And Leland's Advantage of Revel. ch. vii.—Cicero's words are worth transcribing: "Exposui pene non philosophorum judicia sed delirantium somnia "(speaking of the stoic's opinions) nec enim multo absurdiora sunt quæ "poetarum vocibus fusa, ipsa suavitate nocuerunt; qui et ira inflammatos, "et lubidine furentes induxerunt deos; feceruntque ut eorum bella, pug- "nas, prœlia, vulnera, videremus; odia præterea, dissidia, discordias, ortus, "interitus, querelas, lamentationes, effusas in omni intemperantia libidines, "adulteria, vincula, cum humano genere concubitus, mortalesque ex immor- "tali procreatos, cum poetarum autem errore conjungere licet portenta "magorum, Ægyptiorumque in eodem genere dementiam, tum etiam vulgi "opiniones quæ in maxima inconstantia, veritatis ignorantia versantur." Yet Cicero was a *worshipper*, nay, a *priest*, of these very gods!!

† Deut. xii. 31.

‡ Vide supra note; also a full collection of testimonies to this fact, by my learned friend, Dr. Magee, in his very able work on Atonement and Sacrifice, notes, p. 90 to p. 102. When we reflect on the facts briefly but faithfully sketched here, and in the authorities referred to, what must we think of the understanding, or the moral and religious feelings, of those who, to discredit Revelation, panegyrize heathenism, under the pretext of its tolerance? Thus Mr. Gibbon, History of the Decline of the Roman Em-

amongst the Egyptians and Assyrians, the Canaanites and Phœnicians, and from them were these abominations transferred to Greece, and Carthage, and Rome.

Thus foul and odious was the nature, thus wide the diffusion, and thus fatal the effects, of that idolatry; to provide an antidote to which in the Jewish nation, a special divine interposition was employed. Former interpositions had been tried in vain; the deluge, the dispersion of mankind, the divine communication to Noah, and we have reason to believe, to other patriarchs, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, had been ineffectual. Idolatry extended, till there was scarce any apparent mode of

pire, Vol. I. ch. ii. sect. 1. confesses indeed, that not only "every virtue, but "*even vice* acquired its divine representation; that the philosopher could "not adore as gods those imperfect beings whom he must have despised as "men." Yet he speaks with evident approbation of those philosophers, "who, viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence the various errors of the "vulgar, diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers; devoutly fre-"quented the temples of the gods, and, sometimes condescending to act a "part on the theatre of superstition, concealed the sentiments of an atheist "under sacerdotal robes:" and tells us, "That the emperors, who always "exercised the office of supreme pontiff, were convinced that the various "modes of worship contributed alike to the *same salutary purposes*; and "that in every country the form of superstition which had received the "sanction of time and experience was the *best adapted to the climate and "its inhabitants*." The same Mr. Gibbon tells us of "the mild spirit of "antiquity, less attentive to the difference than to the resemblance of their "religious worship:" "of the elegant mythology of Homer [see it described "by Cicero in the last note,] which gave a beautiful and almost a regular "form to the polytheism of the ancient world:" of "the public festivals "which *humanized the manners* of the people," (probably by accustoming them to obscene rites, or gladiatorial combats;) and of "the arts of divina-"tion, managed as a convenient instrument of policy." Of the same system of polytheism, Mr. Hume * tells us in his Natural History of Religion, sect. xi. "That if we examine without prejudice, the ancient heathen mythology, as "contained in the poets, we shall not discover in it any such monstrous "absurdity as we may at first be apt to apprehend. Where is the difficulty," (asks this cautious investigator of probabilities) "in conceiving that the "same powers or principles, *whatever they were*, which formed this visible "world, men and animals, produced also a species of intelligent creatures of "more refined substance and greater authority than the rest? That these "creatures may be capricious, revengeful, passionate, voluptuous, is easily "conceived; nor is any circumstance more apt among ourselves to engender "such vices, than the license of absolute authority. And in short" (concludes this cautious academic investigator of truth) "the whole mythological "system is so natural, that in the variety of planets and worlds contained "in this universe, it seems *more than probable*, that somewhere or other it "is really carried into execution. The chief objection to it with regard "to this planet is, that it is not ascertained by any just reason or authority. "The ancient tradition insisted upon by heathen priests and theologers, is "but a weak foundation, and transmitted also with such a number of con-

* Vide Hume's Essays, Vol. II. p. 442.

preventing its involving all mankind in guilt and profligacy, effacing every trace of primeval piety, as well as of moral virtue, from the earth. So that if at any time the Deity should communicate a new revelation of his will to men, they would be totally unprepared to estimate the truth of its principles, and the weight of its evidence, in order to convince themselves of its divine original. If at any time the imposture and falsehood of heathen priests and oracles, and the vanity of idols, should be detected; there yet would have existed no system of true religion in the world, whence good principles and a pure worship could be restored.

" tradictory reports, supported all of them by equal authority, that it became " absolutely impossible to fix a preference among them. A few volumes, " therefore, must contain all the polemical writings of Pagan priests; and " their whole theology must consist more of traditional stories and superstitious practices, than of philosophical argument and controversy." This want of philosophical argument and controversy, to help out the ancient mythologists, and remove the objection against admitting the poetic polytheism of the heathens in this our planet, must have been a disadvantage not a little to be lamented in the judgment of our philosopher, for he had told us in the preceding page, " That where the Deity is represented as infinitely " superior to mankind; this belief, though altogether just, when joined " with superstitious terrors, is apt to sink the human mind in the lowest " submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, penance, humility and passive suffering, as the only qualities " which are acceptable to him. But where the gods are conceived to be only " a little superior to mankind, and to have been many of them advanced " from that inferior rank, we are more at our ease in our addresses to them, " and may even without profaneness aspire sometimes to a rivalship and " emulation of them: hence activity, spirit, courage, magnanimity, love of " liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people." Alas! how lamentable the departure from so happy a state of things! To bring it back, would be the triumph of *modern philosophy*.

Let us hear another *minute philosopher*, the Abbé Raynal, mourning over the ill-fated virtues of expiring polytheism, and indignant at the edict of Constantine, which prohibited Paganism in the entire extent of his empire. How destructive the consequence! I copy the words of the eloquent Abbé, Histoire Philosophique, Introduction page 10. " Ces vastes contrées se trouverent couvertes d'hommes, qui n'etoient plus lies entr'eux ni a l'etat, par " les nœuds sacres de la religion et du serment; sans prêtres, sans temples, " sans *morale publique*, quel zele pouvoient-ils avoir pour repousser des " ennemis, qui venoient attaquer une domination á laquelle ils ne tenoient " plus." The public morals of Paganism lost, all was lost!

From this it seems pretty clear, that if idolatry had continued in this country to this hour, these philosophers would, to use the words of Mr. Gibbon, " have condescended to act their part on the theatre of superstition, " that the interests of the priests, and the superstition of the people, might " be sufficiently respected." When such representations are disseminated by writers so eloquent and admired, I trust I shall be excused for having dwelt somewhat at length on the absurdity, impiety, and atrocious crimes attendant on idolatry; which, it appears (particularly from their writings,) nothing but Revelation could have checked.

To prevent an apostacy so fatal and irremediable, the moral Governor of the world determined to select one nation, amongst whom to cultivate the principles of true religion and consistent virtue. For this purpose Moses relates, that God selected Abraham,* a man of distinguished virtue and piety: he tried his faith and obedience in various ways, commanding him to quit his country and his kindred, and go into a strange land, which he promised to give unto his seed: he enters into a national covenant with him, that he and his posterity should serve the one true God alone, and God promised on his part "THAT "THROUGH HIS SEED, ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH SHOULD "BE BLESSED:" that so long as his descendants preserved their obedience, God would multiply them, and bless them with the possession of the land of Canaan, and every species of temporal prosperity. As the seal and record of this covenant, God prescribed circumcision to the Jews, which effectually distinguished and separated them from every other people.

Before this divine promise could be carried into full effect, it was necessary this family should multiply into a nation. The time for this, after which they were to take possession of the promised land, is fixed at the original formation of the compact; "Know of a surety (says God to Abraham) that thy "seed shall be a stranger in a land which is not theirs, and "shall serve them, they shall afflict them for four hundred years. "And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: "and after that they shall come out with great substance."†

At the close of the appointed period, Moses was raised up to accomplish the promised deliverance of this chosen nation from their land of bondage; to inflict the judgments God had menaced on the idolaters who had so long oppressed them; to lead the chosen people to the land of their inheritance; and to convey to them, from God himself, such a system of religious and civil government, as was suited to their situation, and to those designs for the accomplishment of which the Divine Wisdom had selected and preserved them: even to erect in the midst of this nation the standard of the one true God, in opposition to idolatry; to exhibit them as an example of divine providence, continually superintending their conduct, rewarding

* Genesis, xii. three first verses—xiii. from v. 14, and ch. xv. xvii. and xxii.

† Genesis, xv. 13.

their adherence to piety and virtue, and punishing their deviations into idolatry and vice; and finally to employ them, in order to prepare the way for the introduction of that blessing, which it was promised should be conveyed through them to all the nations of the earth; even the PROMISED SAVIOUR, CHRIST JESUS; who at the appointed time appeared, to instruct, to reform, and to redeem all who would return and repent; to break down the wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles; to call all nations into one fold, under one shepherd, and turn men every where "from the works of darkness unto "light, and from the power of Satan unto God."*

Such were some of the chief purposes for which the Jewish race was selected, and the Mosaic law promulgated; but in executing this purpose, it was necessary, according to the universal system of God's moral government, to treat the individuals who were to be employed in accomplishing it, as moral agents. In no instance does the Divinity control the actions of human beings by mere physical violence and compulsory restraint: in no instance are men's moral characters wholly neglected and set aside, so as to compel them to sustain a part contrary to the dictates of their judgments, and the feelings of their hearts. No: when the God of nature interferes to direct the conduct of these creatures, whom he has formed with reason to judge and freedom to act for themselves, and whom he has made responsible for the application of that reason, and the exercise of that free will, he employs means adapted to that moral nature he has himself bestowed: these means have for their immediate object, either to enlighten the understanding by instruction suited to the purposes of the divine economy, or to bias the will by such motives, and work on the affections by such instruments and influences, as are adapted to the general character and situation of the agent, as well as to the particular mode of conduct they tend to produce; and to communicate such strength and aid, as, without disturbing the progress or subverting the principles of moral agency, may yet prevent men from being tempted above their power, but with the "tempta- "tion may make them a way to escape, that they may be able "to bear it."†

If therefore we wish to estimate the authority of any sup-

* Acts, xxvi. 18. † 1 Cor. x. 13.

posed revelation, from its internal evidence, we are led to consider the nature as well of the instructions it conveys, as of the motives by which it engages the affections and influences the will; and to compare both with the situation and character of the moral agents to whom these instructions and motives are addressed. Let us apply these principles of enquiry to the Mosaic code, and first consider the purport of these instructions which it addressed to the Jewish people, on the existence and attributes of God, and how far it adapted these instructions to the character and circumstances of the peculiar people for whom they were designed.

If then we examine the Jewish Law, to discover the principle on which the whole system depends, the primary truth, to inculcate and illustrate which is its leading object, we find it to be, that great basis of all religion, both natural and revealed, the self-existence, essential unity, perfections and providence, of the supreme Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth. The first line of the Mosaic writings inculcates this great truth: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." When the Lawgiver begins to recapitulate the statutes and judgments he had enjoined to his nation, it is with this declaration, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*;" or, as it might be more closely expressed, Jehovah our Elohim, or God, is one Jehovah. And at the commencement of that sublime hymn, delivered immediately before his death, in which this illustrious Prophet sums up the doctrines he had taught, the wonders by which they had been confirmed, and the denunciations by which they were enforced, he declares this great tenet with the sublimity of Eastern poetry, but at the same time with the precision of philosophic truth: "Give ear," says he, "O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words "of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain: my speech "shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, "and as the showers upon the grass †." What, is that doctrine so awful, that the whole universe is thus invoked to attend to it? So salutary, as to be compared with the principle, whose operation diffuses beauty and fertility over the vegetable world? Hear the answer: "Because I will publish the name of Jeho-"vah; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock,

* Deut. vi. 4. † Ibid. xxxii. 1, &c.

"his work is perfect: a God of truth, and without iniquity, "just and right is he."

This then is one great leading doctrine of the Jewish code. But the manner in which this doctrine is taught, displays such wise accommodation to the capacity and character of the nation to whom it is addressed, as deserves to be carefully remarked. That character by which the Supreme Being is most clearly distinguished from every other, however exalted; that character, from which the acutest reasoners* have endeavoured demonstratively to deduce, as from their source, all the divine attributes, is SELF-EXISTENCE. Is it not then highly remarkable, that it is under this character the Divinity is described on his first manifestation to the Jewish Lawgiver? The Deity at first reveals himself unto him as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; and therefore the peculiar national, and guardian God of the Jewish race. Moses, conscious of the degeneracy of the Israelites, their ignorance of, or their inattention to the true God, and the difficulty and danger of any attempt to recall them to his exclusive worship, and to withdraw them from Egypt, seems to decline the task; but, when absolutely commanded to undertake it, he said unto God, "Behold, when I come unto "the Children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of "your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to "me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And "God said unto Moses, *I Am, that I Am:* and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, *I Am* hath sent me unto you."† Here we observe, according to the constant method of the divine wisdom, when it condescends to the prejudices of

* Vide Dr. Clarke on the Attributes; Wollaston's Religion of Nature, sect. v.; Bishop Gastrell Boyle's Lectures, sub initio. And particularly, vide Dr. Hugh Hamilton (once a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and late Bishop of Ossory,) On the Being and Attributes of God. I gladly embrace this opportunity of paying my humble tribute of respect to the memory of a man, who applied the most powerful talents to the most useful purposes; equally eminent in mathematical and theological learning (for he was the author of a Treatise on Conic Sections, one of the most original and beautiful specimens of pure geometrical reasoning ever exhibited, and as such generally adopted.) Highly respectable also for his private virtue, he will ever rank as a most distinguished ornament of the University of Dublin, and the church of Ireland. And as his life was estimable, so its close was enviable; he died full of years and of honours, encircled by a virtuous and respectable family, trained by his precepts to emulate his example.

† Exod. iii. 13, 14.

men, how in the very instance of indulgence it corrects their superstition. The religion of names arose from an idolatrous polytheism*; and the name given here directly opposes this error, and in the ignorance of that dark and corrupted period establishes clearly that great truth, to which the most enlightened philosophy can add no new lustre, and on which all the most refined speculations on the divine nature ultimately rest, the SELF-EXISTENCE, and, by consequence, the eternity and immutability, of the one great Jehovah.

If we adopt the opinion of those interpreters†, who discover in this passage, not only a declaration of the self-existence and immutability of the Deity, but an intimation of that great Deliverer, "who was, and is, and is to come, the same yesterday, "to-day, and for ever;" the indication of a truth so certain, and yet to mere human imagination so unthought of at that early period, would confirm, beyond possibility of doubt, the original of a declaration, which divine wisdom alone could promulgate, and divine power alone could fulfil.

The progress of this interesting narrative supplies new proofs of the wisdom with which this revelation was adapted to the nation to whom it was addressed, and the purposes for which it was designed. Immediately after the command, "Thus shalt "thou say unto the Children of Israel, *I Am* hath sent me unto "you," it is added ‡, "And God said moreover unto Moses, "Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, The Lord "God of your fathers," (or rather, Jehovah the God of your fathers) "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the "God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for "ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Does not this passage clearly intimate, that the peculiar and incommunicable character of the one true God, was self-existence, that he was the great I AM; yet that this abstract and philosophic description of the Supreme Being was not sufficiently calculated to arrest the attention, conciliate the confidence, and command the obedience, of a people entirely unaccustomed to

* Vide Warburton's Divine Legat. B. IV. sect. vi. sub initio.

† Vide Houbigant on Exod. iii. 14.; Parkhurst's Lexicon, on the words יהוה and יה and Bibliotheca Biblica in locum. Compare John viii. 58. and Revel. i. 4. and iv. 8.

‡ Exod. iii. 15.

scientific speculations, and incapable of being influenced by any other than temporal motives; and that it was therefore necessary to represent to them the Supreme Governor of the universe in a more circumscribed and attractive form, as the God of their fathers, who had conferred the most distinguished favours on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to whom their posterity might, from the full assurance which fact and experience supply, look up with confidence, as their peculiar guardian God; and in the religion framed for them, recognize a system clearly and certainly exalting them above all idolatrous nations, who hoped to derive prosperity from the protection of their peculiar tutelary gods?

This necessity of accommodating the religious instructions communicated to the Jews to their capacity and feelings, should never be forgotten, when we consider the meaning and objects of these instructions. If they are really of divine original, it may be required, that they should certainly be in no instance inconsistent with the more complete discoveries of religious truth, which subsequent researches and subsequent revelations supply; and perhaps it might be expected that they should (as in this instance is evident) contain such intimations of these truths, as would to future ages prove the divine wisdom, which so far developed them. But we are not, surely, to wonder that doctrines of more immediate necessity, and more powerful influence, should be more frequently insisted on: we are not to wonder that the self-existence of the Deity should be rarely dwelt on; his character as God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, perpetually brought forward: we are not to wonder that the attributes and the conduct of the Divinity should be described in language, and illustrated by metaphors, derived from the human character, and even from human passions: we are not to wonder that immediate and temporal sanctions should be preferred to spiritual and remote; and in general we may expect that the language and manner in which religious truths are inculcated, should be adapted to the gross imaginations and short-sighted views of the people, for whom they were designed.

But though the SELF-EXISTENCE of the Deity was a fact too abstract to require its being frequently inculcated: his ESSENTIAL UNITY was a practical principle, the sure foundation on which to erect the structure of true religion, and form a barrier against

the encroachments of idolatry. For this commenced not so frequently in denying the existence, or even the supremacy of the one true God, as in associating with him for objects of adoration, inferior intermediate beings, who are supposed to be more directly employed in the administration of human affairs. To confute and resist this false principle was, therefore, one great object of the Jewish scheme. Hence the unity of God is inculcated with perpetual solicitude; it stands at the head of the system of moral Law promulgated to the Jews from Sinai by the divine voice, heard by the assembled nation, and issuing from the divine glory, with every circumstance which could impress the deepest awe upon even the dullest minds. "I am "the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land "of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; thou shalt have no "other gods beside me.*" And in the recapitulation of the divine Laws in Deuteronomy, it is repeatedly enforced with the most solemn earnestness: "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God "is one Lord; and again, "Unto thee it was shewed, that "thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none "else beside him. Know therefore, this day, and consider it in "thine heart, that the Lord he is God in Heaven above, and "upon the earth beneath: there is none else†."

This SELF-EXISTENT, SUPREME, and ONLY GOD is, moreover, described as possessed of EVERY PERFECTION which can be ascribed to the Divinity. "Ye shall be holy," (says the Lord to the people of the Jews;) "for I the Lord your God am holy. "Ascribe ye," says the Legislator, "greatness unto our God; "he is the Rock, his work is perfect; a God of truth, and "without iniquity, just and right is he‡." And in the hymn of joy and thanksgiving on the miraculous escape of the Israelites at the Red Sea, this is its burthen: "Who is like unto thee "O Lord, amongst the gods? who is like unto thee, glorious in "holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders§?" And when the Lord delivered to Moses the two tables of the moral Law, he is described as descending in the cloud, and proclaiming the name of the Lord. "And the Lord passed by before him, and "proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, "long-suffering, and abundant in goodness, keeping mercy for

* Exod. xx. 2 and 3. † Deut. iv. 35 and 39. and vi. 4.
‡ Lev. xix. 2. Deut. xxxii. 3. § Exod. xv. 11.

"thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that "will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the "fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, "unto the third and to the fourth generation.*" Thus, while one character is ascribed to the Deity, which is peculiarly connected with the particular scheme of moral government exercised by Divine Providence over the Jews, that of visiting the iniquities and the virtues of the parents upon the children; at the same time every virtue is ascribed to Him, which the most exalted benevolence can desire, or the most refined philosophy conceive.

But to teach the self-existence, the unity, the wisdom and the power, of the Deity; nay, even his moral perfections of mercy, justice and truth; would have been insufficient to arrest the attention and command the obedience of a nation, the majority of which looked no farther than mere present objects, and at that early period cherished scarcely any hopes higher than those of a temporal kind—if, in addition to all this, care had not been taken to represent the PROVIDENCE of God as not only directing the government of the universe by general laws, but also perpetually superintending the conduct and determining the fortune of every nation, of every family, nay, of every individual. It was the disbelief or the neglect of this great truth, which gave spirit and energy, plausibility and attraction, to the whole system of idolatry. While men believed that the supreme God and Lord of all was too exalted in his dignity, too remote from this sublunary scene, to regard its vicissitudes with an attentive eye; and too constantly engaged† in the contemplation of his own perfections, and the enjoyment of his own independent and all-perfect happiness, to interfere in the regulation of human affairs; they regarded with indifference that supreme Divinity, who seemed to take no concern in their conduct, and to interfere not as to their happiness. However exalted and perfect such a Being might appear to abstract speculation, he was to the generality of mankind as if he did not exist: as their happiness or misery were not supposed to be influenced by his power, they referred not their conduct to his direction. If He delegated to

* Exod. xxxiv. 6 and 7.

† Vide Cicero de Nat. Deorum, Lib. I. cap. lxi. to the end.

* inferior beings the regulation of this inferior world; if all its concerns were conducted by their immediate agency, and all its blessings or calamities distributed by their immediate determination; it seemed rational, and even necessary, to supplicate their favour and submit to their authority; and neither unwise nor unsafe to neglect that Being, who, though all-perfect and supreme, would on this supposition appear, with respect to mankind, altogether inoperative.

There are abundant proofs, how deeply these feelings and opinions were imbibed by the whole Jewish race; and how indispensably necessary it was, to counteract their influence. Some examples are necessary, and a few will be sufficient. When the Patriarch Jacob, after being solemnly invested by Isaac, acting under the divine authority, with the blessing of Abraham, was honoured by a celestial vision †, to renew the same covenant with him personally, and repeat to him the divine promise, not only "that his seed should multiply as the dust of the earth, "and should inherit the land in which he slept, but that in him "and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" the Patriarch awakes impressed with the deepest awe and reverence; he rears an altar, pours upon it a libation, and vows a vow: but such a vow, as proves that even here his imagination was occupied, not so much with the character of God as supreme governor of the world, not so much with any anxiety to secure the temporal but remote part of the promise which regarded his posterity, or the spiritual part which announced that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, as with that which promised immediate protection and prosperity to himself.—"Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and "will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to "eat, and raiment to put on; so that I come again to my father's "house in peace; then shall Jehovah the Lord be my God. "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's "house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give "the tenth unto thee ‡."

Further, as the expectation of temporal blessings was the most powerful motive to attach man to the worship of the true God; so was it the source of all idolatry to false divinities, through

* Vide supra, p. 108, the note. † Gen. xxviii. 12—15.
‡ Gen. xxviii. 20—22.

every period of the Jewish history. Hence, on the defeat of the Syrians by the Jews, "the servants of the king of Syria "said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore "they were stronger than we: but let us fight against them in "the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they*." This then was the radical error on which idolatry was founded. To counteract it, the Jewish legislator uniformly represents the supreme Jehovah, as the sole distributor of every present good and evil, as perpetually watching the conduct of mankind, and regulating the whole series of their fortunes according to their merit or demerit; and states the Jewish people to be selected, that, by the plan of their religion, the constitution of their government, and the constant adjustment of their prosperity or adversity, to their fidelity towards Jehovah, and their obedience to his will, they might exhibit a decisive proof of his overruling providence in all human affairs†.

The declarations of the Jewish Lawgiver on this topic are most full, especially in the book of Deuteronomy, in which he recapitulates the wonders of divine power in their behalf, which

* 1 Kings, xx. 23.

† I have been much gratified at finding the idea here adduced, of one leading object of the Jewish Scheme, confirmed, and very ingeniously illustrated by the late Rev. Newcome Cappe, a writer of considerable learning and talent, in his "Critical Remarks on Scripture," Vol. II. p. 195; in his *Idea of Judaism and its peculiar End and Object*;—viz. "to exhibit a sen-"sible specimen, by way of proof, of God's moral government." On this he observes, that "the essential principle of the Jewish economy was—that "this people, as a nation, should be secure and prosperous, while they "obeyed the civil and religious institutions of their country—endangered "and distressed, when they departed from them, or neglected them." And he proceeds to remark, that "the Jews in their character and fate, and the "correspondence of them to one another, might be an exhibition of the "moral government of God, it was necessary that their Law and their cir-"cumstances should *appear* to be the work of God; that their obedience to "God should be in such things as are *obvious and sensible*, in respect of "which all men might judge of their character, whether it were corres-"pondent to the Law or not; and that their circumstances, in like manner, "and their correspondence, to the respect they paid to the Law, should be "obvious and observable."

In order that such a sensible specimen, by way of proof, should be given of God's moral government, he observes very truly, that "it was ne-cessary,

"1st, That it should not be in *individuals merely*, who could not be con-"spicuous or interesting enough to engage the attention of mankind at large, "or would, if extending to any great number, be too obscure, and require as "great attention and discernment to perceive it, as are necessary to collect "the moral governments of God from the general laws of creation and "providence.

the Jews themselves had witnessed; and is therefore able to impress the conviction of the divine providence from their own experience. It is, however, frequently inculcated on other occasions, as before the solemn publication of the ten commandments, God, by Moses, addresses the Children of Israel: "Ye "have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore "you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now "therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my "covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above "all people: for all the earth is mine.* "

Most remarkable is the declaration in the solemn hymn which closes the writings of the illustrious Lawgiver: "Remember," says he, addressing the assembled nation, "remember the days "of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, "and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, "when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the "people according to the number of the Children of Israel. For "the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inhe- "ritance. He found him in a desart land, and in the waste

"Nor, 2dly, in the world at large promiscuously; for this could not be "well discerned, or form a striking object for distinct observation.

"Nor, 3dly, in respect of moral virtue merely, for of moral merit mankind "cannot judge, the motives of human conduct are not penetrable by human "eye, its external expressions are uncertain and equivocal. But whether or "no, men practise a certain mode of external conduct, this or that form of "worship, for instance, this or that mode of domestic life, may be ascer- "tained; and such actions, though not of themselves moral, yet, when made "the subjects of command by a rightful superior, put on a moral quality— "but for this they must be the subject of a positive law; the promulgation "and execution, therefore, of such a Law, is an argument and exhibition of "the moral government of God.

"In the 4th place," Mr. Cappe observes, "the remuneration must be "sensible and obvious, like the conduct which is its object; it must not, "therefore, consist in any thing merely internal, as in mental joys and "hopes—or regrets and fears." And therefore, I *add*, not in the hopes or fears of a future life, solely or principally.

I cannot here avoid expressing my regret, that these two volumes of Mr. Cappe do not contain more of his reasonings on the general evidence of Christianity, or of those beautiful moral discourses, some extracts from which his ingenious and amiable Editor gives in her very interesting account of his life, rather than those controversial discussions and criticisms, in which, from his unfortunate attachment to Socinianism, it must seem to so many of his readers (as it certainly does to me) that his judgment is clouded by prejudice, and his ingenuity employed to defend error.

* Exod. xix. 4.

"howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he "kept him as the apple of his eye." * And this sublime hymn closes with the following awful declaration, on the subject of which we now treat. When foreseeing the apostacy of the Jews, in turning to false Gods, and denouncing the punishments which should in consequence be inflicted upon them, he describes the Deity as expostulating with his wayward people: "Where are "their gods, the rock in which they trusted, which did eat the "fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-"offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protec-"tion. See now that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me. "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there "any that can deliver out of my hand; for I lift up mine hand "to heaven, and say, I live for ever.†"

In truth, this fact of the perpetual providence of God extending even to the minutest events, is inseparably connected with every motive which is offered to sway the conduct of the Jews, and forcibly inculcated by every event of their history. This had been manifested in the appointment of the land of Canaan for the future settlement of the chosen people, on the first covenant which God entered into with the patriarch Abraham; in the prophecy, that for four hundred years they should be afflicted in Egypt, and afterwards be thence delivered; in the increase of their nation, under circumstances of extreme oppression, and their supernatural deliverance from that oppression. The same Providence was displayed in the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; the travels of the thousands of Israel through the wilderness, sustained by food from heaven; and in their subsequent settlement in the promised land, by means entirely distinct from their own strength.

Reliance on the same Providence was the foundation of their civil government, the spirit and the principle of their constitution. On this only could they be commanded to keep the sabbatic year without tilling their land, or even gathering its spontaneous produce: confiding in the divine promise, that God would send his "blessing on the sixth year, so that it should "bring forth fruit for three years.‡" The same faith in divine Providence alone could prevail on them to leave their properties and families exposed to the attack of their surrounding enemies;

* Deut. xxxii. 7. † Ib. ver. 37, &c. ‡ Lev. xxv. 21.

while all the males of the nation assembled at Jerusalem, to celebrate the three great festivals, enjoined by divine command, with the assurance, that "no man should desire their land, when "they went up to appear before the Lord their God thrice in "the year."* And finally, it is most evident, that, contrary to all other lawgivers, the Jewish legislator renders his civil institutions entirely subordinate to his religious; and announces to his nation, that their temporal adversity or prosperity would entirely depend—not on their observance of their political regulations, not on their preserving a military spirit, or acquiring commercial wealth, or strengthening themselves by powerful alliances—but on their continuing to worship the one true God, according to the religious rites and ceremonies by him prescribed, and preserving their piety and morals untainted by the corruptions and vices which idolatry tended to introduce. How clear and impressive are the concluding words of the last exhortation of their illustrious Lawgiver, to the assembled nation: "See," says he, "I have set before thee this day life and good, death and "evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy "God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and "his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and "multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land "whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, "so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and wor-"ship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this "day, that ye shall surely perish, and that you shall not prolong "your days upon the land whither thou passest over Jordan to "possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness against you "this day, that I have set before thee life and death, blessing "and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed "may live; that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that "thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto "him, (for he is thy life and the length of thy days) that thou "mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy "fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."†

Such was the theology of the Jewish religion, at a period when the whole world was deeply infected with idolatry; when all knowledge of the one true God, all reverence for his sacred name, all reliance on his providence, all obedience to his laws,

* Exod. xxxiv. 24. † Deut. xxx. 15, &c.

were nearly banished from the earth; when the severest chastisements had been tried in vain; when no hope of reformation appeared from the refinements of civilization or the researches of philosophy; for the most civilized and enlightened nations adopted with the greatest greediness, and disseminated with the greatest activity, the absurdities, impieties and pollutions of idolatry. Then was the Jewish Law promulgated to a nation, who, to mere human judgment, might have appeared incapable of inventing or receiving such a high degree of intellectual or moral improvement; for they had been long enslaved to the Egyptians, the authors and supporters of the grossest idolatry; they had been weighed down by the severest bondage, perpetually harassed by the most incessant manual labours; for the Egyptians "made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in "brick, and in all manner of service in the field.*" At this time, and in this nation, was the Mosaic Law promulgated, teaching the great principles of true religion, the self-existence, the unity, the perfections and the providence, of the one great Jehovah; reprobating all false gods, all image-worship, all the absurdities and profanations of idolatry. At this time, and in this nation, was a system of government framed, which had for its basis the reception of, and steady adherence to, this system of true religion; and establishing many regulations, which would be in the highest degree irrational, and could never hope to be received, except from a general and thorough reliance on the superintendence of Divine Providence, controlling the course of nature, and directing every event, so as to proportion the prosperity of the Hebrew people, according to their obedience to that Law which they received as divine.

In the mode in which the doctrines of their religion were promulgated, we find a minute attention to the moral and intellectual character of the nation for whom it was designed, and the most admirable precautions used, to impress attention and command obedience, if the authority of the Lawgiver was in reality divine; but precautions of such a nature as would render his whole scheme abortive, and expose it to derision and contempt, if he had contrived it only by human artifice, and relied on nothing but human aid.

* Exod. i. 14.

Here, then, I rest the first presumptive argument for the divine original of the Jewish scheme. And I contend that the promulgation of such a system of theology, at such a period, and to such a people, so connected with the form of its government, and adopting such extraordinary regulations and precautions, cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, without allowing the truth of the Mosaic history, the deliverance of Israel by supernatural aid, and the establishment of their religion and government by divine authority.

LECTURE II.

The Ten Commandments due to the Mosaic Law—Their extent—Their importance illustrated by the practices of the heathen world—The Jewish religion inculcates the two great principles, of love to God, and love to man—Also love to our enemies, as far as was practicable under the Jewish economy—It did not substitute outward observances for internal piety—Proved from the general principles of internal religion, which it establishes—From the conditions on which alone it proposes the forgiveness of transgressions—From the connexion it points out, between the ceremonies of the ritual and internal religion—Recapitulation.

DEUTERONOMY, iv. 8.

"What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this Law which I set before you this day?"

It shall be the object of this Lecture to enquire, how far this character, which the Jewish Legislator ascribes to his Law, is justified by the nature of the general moral principles which it inculcates, and the specific precepts it lays down, compared with the period at which they were promulgated, and the disposition and capacity of the nation for whom they were designed. In the first place, then, it is an obvious, but it is not therefore a less important remark, that to the Jewish religion we owe that admirable summary of moral duty, contained in the Ten Commandments. All fair reasoners will admit, that each of these must be understood to condemn, not merely the extreme crime which it expressly prohibits, but every inferior offence of the same kind, and every mode of conduct leading to such transgression;* and, on the contrary, to enjoin opposite

* That the Ten Commandments were understood in this extensive sense by the Jews themselves, is evident, not only from the various declarations of the inspired Psalmist and the Prophets, but from the testimonies of such Jewish writings as have reached us, particularly those of Josephus and the celebrated Philo. I refer in particular to the following passages:—Psalms, iv. xv. and xix. 12, 13.; Psalm xxxvi. 16, to the end, particularly 23.; Psalm lxxxii. 2, 3, 4.; Psalms, ci. and cxix. passim, particularly 151, 163, 172.;

conduct, and the cultivation of opposite dispositions. Thus, the command, "Thou shalt not kill," condemns not merely the single crime of deliberate murder, but every kind of violence, and every indulgence of passion and resentment, which tends either to excite such violence, or to produce that malignant disposition of mind, in which the guilt of murder principally consists: and similarly of the rest. In this extensive interpretation of the Commandments, we are warranted, not merely by the deductions of reason, but by the letter of the Law itself. For the addition of the *last*, "Thou shalt not covet," proves clearly that in *all*, the dispositions of the heart, as much as the immediate outward act, is the object of the Divine Legislator; and thus it forms a comment on the meaning, as well as a guard for the observance, of all the preceding commands.

Interpreted in this natural and rational latitude, how compre-

Isaiah, i. from 10 to 20.; also lvi. lviii. lxi.; Jeremiah, vii. sixteen first verses. All these passages shew clearly, that sincere and heartfelt piety and virtue, not Pharisaical strictness or mere ceremonial worship, were demanded by the Jewish Law.

In confirmation, consult Josephus, Book II. against Apion, from sect. xvi. to the end. The following beautiful and important passage is very full and express:—"The reason," says he, "why the constitution of this legislation "was ever better directed to the utility of all, than other legislations were, "is this: that Moses did not make religion a part of virtue, but he saw and "he ordained other virtues to be part of religion: I mean justice, and for- "titude, and temperance, and an universal agreement of the members of the "community with one another; for all our actions and studies, and all our "words, (in Moses's settlement) have a reference to piety towards God." And again, sect. xxiii. "What are the things then that we are commanded "or forbidden? They are simple, and easily known. The first command "is concerning God, and affirms that God contains all things, and is a Being "every way perfect and happy, self-sufficient, and supplying all other "beings; the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things. He is mani- "fest in his works and benefits, and more conspicuous than any other Being "whatsoever. But as to his form and magnitude, he is most obscure; all "materials, however costly, are unworthy to compose an image for him; "and all arts are unartful, to express the notion we ought to have of him: "we can neither see nor think of any thing like him, nor is it agreeable to "piety to form a resemblance of him. We see his works—the light, the "heaven, the earth, the sun and the moon, the waters, the generations "of animals, the productions of fruits: these things hath God made, not "with hands, not with labour, nor as wanting the assistance of any to co- "operate with him; but as his will resolved they should be made, and be "good also, they were made and became good immediately. All men ought "to follow this Being, and to worship him in the exercise of virtue; for "this way of the worship of God is the most holy of all others." In explaining the other principles of moral duty, he combines the direct commands of the Decalogue with their various additions, explanations and improvements, which are dispersed through the entire Pentateuch; thus applying them in the most extensive latitude.

hensive and important is this summary of moral duty. It inculcates the adoration of the one true God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is; who must, therefore, be infinite in power, and wisdom, and goodness; the object of exclusive adoration, of gratitude for every blessing we enjoy; of fear, for he is a jealous God; of hope, for he is merciful. It prohibits every species of idolatry; whether by associating false gods with the true, or worshipping the true by symbols and images. Commanding not to take the name of God in vain, it enjoins the observance of all outward respect for the Divine Authority, as well as the cultivation of inward sentiments and feelings, suited to this outward reverence; and it establishes the obligation of oaths, and, by consequence, of all compacts and deliberate promises; a principle, without which the administration of laws would be impracticable, and the bonds of society must be dissolved.

The view which Philo takes of this subject, in his Tract on the Decalogue, and the two subsequent Tracts on the special Laws connected with the different parts of it, is equally extended. He says, "The commands which "God himself proclaimed, are not only Laws, but the summaries or general "heads of particular Laws; and those which he promulgated by his prophet "Moses, are all to be referred to the former*." On the first and second commandment†, he argues at large against the absurdity and guilt of idolatry in all its points; on the third, ‡ he impresses with the greatest earnestness, the guilt either of perjury or rash swearing in conversation: "He who is "about to swear," says he, "ought diligently to examine all the circum-"stances attending the subject, about which he is to swear; whether it be "important, whether it be true, whether it be certainly apprehended by him. "Next, he ought to consider himself, whether his soul is pure from guilt, "his body from pollution, his tongue from evil speaking; for it is criminal "to permit any thing unworthy to be uttered by that mouth, which pro-"nounces the most holy name." Considering the Ten Commandments as summaries of general Laws, he observes,|| that "To the fourth is to be "referred every thing relating to the festival days and sabbaths, vows, sa-"crifices, purifications, and every other part of religious worship." On the fifth he observes, "That in the precept, 'Honour your parents,' are included "many Laws, prescribing the duties of the young to the old, of subjects to "magistrates, and servants to masters, and those who have received benefits "to their benefactors." And thus of the rest.

I have made these quotations, to prove that the Mosaic Law effected the purposes which I have contended it was calculated to promote; by rectifying and enlarging the moral views of the reflecting and enlightened part of the Jewish nation, to a degree far superior to that which Pagan morality had attained; a circumstance particularly remarkable, in the extent which Philo (p. 592, Letter *f*,) gives to the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," as prohibiting any irregular desire and licentious indulgence. A strictness utterly unknown to the heathen world.

* Vide Philonis Opera, p. 576, Letter *c*.
† Ibid. from p. 579, Letter *f*, to 583, Letter *e*.
‡ Philo, p. 583, Letter *f*, and 584, Letter *e*.
|| Philonis Operr, p. 590, from Letter *f* to the end of the Tract on the Decalogue.

By commanding to keep holy the sabbath, as the memorial of the creation, it establishes the necessity of public worship, and of a stated and outward profession of the truths of religion, as well as of the cultivation of suitable feelings: and it enforces this by a motive which is equally applicable to all mankind; and which should have taught the Jew, that he ought to consider all nations as equally creatures of that Jehovah whom he himself adored; equally subject to his government, and, if sincerely obedient, entitled to all the privileges his favour could bestow. It is also remarkable, that this commandment, requiring that the rest of the sabbath should include the man servant, and the maid servant, and the stranger that was within their gates, nay, even their cattle, proved that the Creator of the Universe extended his attention to all his creatures; that the humblest of mankind were the objects of his paternal love; that no accidental differences, which so often create alienation amongst different nations, would alienate any from the divine regard; and that even the brute creation shared the benevolence of their Creator, and ought to be treated by men with gentleness and humanity.

When we proceed to the second table, comprehending more expressly our social duties, we find all the most important principles on which they depend, clearly enforced. The commandment which enjoins, "Honour thy father and mother," sanctions the principles, not merely of filial obedience, but of all those duties which arise from our domestic relations; and, while it requires not so much any one specific act, as the general disposition which should regulate our whole course of conduct in this instance, it impresses the important conviction, that the entire Law proceeds from a Legislator able to search and judge the heart of man.

The subsequent commands coincide with the clear dictates of reason, and prohibit crimes which human laws in general have prohibited as plainly destructive of social happiness. But it was of infinite importance to rest the prohibitions, "Thou "shalt not kill—Thou shalt not commit adultery—Thou shalt "not steal—Thou shalt not bear false witness," not merely on the deductions of reason, but also on the weight of a divine authority. How often have false ideas of public good in some places, depraved passions in others, and the delusions of idolatry in still more, established a law of reputation contrary to

the dictates of reason, and the real interests of society. In one country we see theft allowed, if perpetrated with address: * in others, piracy and rapine honoured, † if conducted with intrepidity. Sometimes we perceive adultery permitted, ‡ the most unnatural crimes committed without remorse or shame;§ nay, every species of impurity enjoined and consecrated, as a part of divine worship. In others, we find revenge honoured as spirit—and death inflicted at its impulse, with ferocious triumph. Again, we see every feeling of nature outraged, and parents ‖ exposing their helpless children to perish, for deformity of body or weakness of mind, or, what is still more dreadful, from mercenary or political views; and this inhuman practice familiarized by custom, and authorized by law. And, to close the horrid catalogue, we see false religions leading their deluded votaries to heap the altars of their idols with human victims: ¶ the master butchers his slave, the conqueror his captive; nay, dreadful to relate, the parent sacrifices his children, and, while they shriek amidst the tortures of the flames, or in the agonies of death, he drowns their cries by the clangor of cymbals and the yells of fanatacism. Yet these abominations, separate or combined, have disgraced ages and nations which we are accustomed to admire and celebrate as civilized and enlightened—Babylon and Egypt, Phœnicia and Carthage, Greece and Rome. Many of these crimes legislators have enjoined, or philosophers

* Vide Universal Hist. B. I. ch. xix. Vol. I. p. 564; and Plutarch in Lycurgus.

† Thucyd. Lib. 1. sect. v.

‡ Universal Hist. Vol. I. 562; and Plutarch, in his Life of Lycurgus.

§ The proofs of this melancholy fact are unhappily too numerous. The second Eclogue of the correct Virgil is instar omnium. Vide also Plutarch in Lycurgus, compared with Xenophon's Vindication, acknowledging that such guilt was authorized in many places, by the public Laws. Vide Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Part I. ch. vii. and Part II. ch. iii.

‖ Vide Plutarch in Lycurgus, who made it a Law, that the father was obliged to submit his child to the inspection of certain judges, to determine whether it should be preserved, or cast into a deep cavern to perish. Plutarch passes no censure on it. Vide also, the Self-Tormentor of Terence, Act iii. scene 4. Plato and Aristotle approve this cruel violation of natural duty and affection. Vide Plato de Republica, Lib. V. pp. 25 and 28; and Aristotle Politic. Lib. VII. cap. xvi.; and Cicero de Legibus, Lib. III. cap. vlii. by which it appears, this practice was enjoined by a law of the Twelve Tables at Rome.

¶ Vide the authorities quoted in the last Lecture, note, pp. 193, 194, and 195, &c.; and Dr. Ryan's useful Work on the Effects of Religion, Vol. I. p. 57, and seq.

defended. What indeed could be hoped from legislators and philosophers, when we recollect the institutions of Lycurgus, especially as to purity of manners,* and the regulations of Plato on the same subject, in his model of a perfect republic; when we consider the sensuality of the Epicureans, and immodesty of the Cynics; when we find suicide† applauded by the Stoics, and the murderous combats of gladiators defended by Cicero, and exhibited by Trajan? Such variation and inconstancy in the rule and practice of moral duty, as established by the feeble or fluctuating authority of human opinion, demonstrates the utility of a clear divine interposition, to impress these important prohibitions; and it is difficult for any sagacity to calculate, how far such an interposition was necessary, and what effect it may have produced by influencing human opinions and regulating human conduct, when we recollect that the Mosaic code was probably the first written law ever delivered to any nation; and that it must have been generally known in those eastern countries, from which the most ancient and celebrated legislators and sages derived the models of their laws and the principles of their philosophy.

Such is the substance, and such the importance, of the Decalogue.‡ Shall we then censure and despise the Jewish law, as a system of mere external and useless ceremonies; when it evidently places this great summary of moral duty at the head of all its institutions; and, in the very mode of its promulgation, stamps it with a sacredness and authority suited to its natural pre-eminence? For let it be remembered, that the

* Vide Plutarch in Lycurgus; and Plato de Republica, Lib. V. This last exhibits the melancholy and humiliating spectacle, of the most enlightened of heathen philosophers coolly adopting, and recommending as the perfection of public morals, a system of more brutalizing turpitude and unnatural cruelty, than ever in fact disgraced human nature in its most depraved state, or polluted the pages of the most licentious writer. Vide Vol. VII. from p. 17 to 28, Editio Bipontina. Alas! how striking a proof of the importance of Revelation!

† Vide Cicero de Finibus, Lib. III. cap. xviii; Leland, Part. II. ch. xi.

‡ How strongly is this expressed in the language of some East Indians, to the English! "If you send us a missionary, send us one who has learned "your Ten Commandments." Vide Dr. Buchanan's Essay on the Establishment of an Episcopal Church in India, p. 61. a most interesting and important Work. Vide in the same Work, the cruel and immoral practices sanctioned by the Hindoo superstition, which supply an additional proof of the necessity of Revelation, to rectify the errors, and regulate the conduct of Man.

Decalogue alone was promulgated to the Jews, not by the intermediate ministry of their legislator, but directly to the assembled nation by the voice of God, issuing from the glory on the top of Sinai. Thus does the Jewish legislator appeal to his nation in attestation of this fact: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day. The Lord our God made a covenant in Horeb: the Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us alive unto this day. The Lord talked with you face to face, out of the midst of the fire, saying, I am the Lord your God."* Moses then repeats the Ten Commandments, and adds, "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice, and he added no more; and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."

Thus awful was the promulgation of the divine Law, enjoining these great principles of duty both towards God and man; first, to the Jews, and through them, we may truly assert, to all the nations of the earth. And was not this an occasion worthy of the direct interposition of the Deity? May we not, without derogating from the wisdom and beneficence of the Divinity, ascribe to him such a law, so promulgated?

But the Jewish religion promoted the interests of moral virtue, not merely by the positive injunctions of the Decalogue; it also inculcated clearly and authoritatively the two great principles on which all piety and virtue depend, and which our blessed Lord recognized as the commandments on which hang the Law and the Prophets;—the principles of LOVE TO GOD and LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOUR. The LOVE OF GOD is every where enjoined in the Mosaic Law, as the ruling disposition of the heart, from which all obedience should spring, and in which it ought to terminate. With what solemnity does the Jewish Lawgiver impress it, at the commencement of his recapitulation of the divine Law; "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, with all thine heart, and with all thy might."† And again, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his

* Deut. v. 1, &c.

† Deut. vi. 4 and 5.

"ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God, with "all thy heart and with all thy soul?".*

Nor is the love of our neighbour less explicitly enforced: "Thou shalt not," says the Law, "avenge, nor bear any grudge "against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy "neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord."† The operation of this benevolence thus solemnly required, was not to be confined to their own countrymen; it was to extend to the stranger, who, having renounced idolatry, was permitted to live amongst them, worshipping the true God, though without submitting to circumcision or the other ceremonial parts of the Mosaic Law. "If a stranger," says the law, "sojourn with thee in your "land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth "with you, shall be unto you as one born amongst you, and "thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the "land of Egypt: I am the Lord thy God."‡

Nay further, the Jewish Law recognized that exalted principle, of loving our enemies, and doing good to them that hate us; where it commanded, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or "his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him "again. And if thou see the ass of him that hateth thee, lying "under his burthen, and wouldest forbear to help him; thou "shalt surely help with him."§ It may however be questioned, from the nature of the good offices here enjoined, as well as from the corresponding passages, which speak of a brother or fellow Jew in this case, whether this injunction could be understood to imply more, than that no private enmity between one Jew and another should interrupt that intercourse of good offices, which ought to subsist between the professors of the same religion, and members of the same community. But even thus, the Jewish religion introduced and inculcated that great principle of benevolence, as far as it was possible to practise it under the circumstances in which the Hebrew people were placed, and the design for which it was selected. All the surrounding nations were idolaters, any intimate society with whom they were commanded to avoid; and no strangers could be permitted to dwell amongst them, until they had renounced idolatry; for such permission would have exposed the Jews to

* Deut. x. 12. † Lev. xix. 18. ‡ Levit. xix. 33 and 34.
§ Exod. xxiii. 4 and 5.

temptations too powerful for them to resist, as subsequent experience clearly proved. Hence the Law particularizes the children of their people, and the stranger who dwelt among them having renounced idolatry, as the objects of their benevolence, lest it should be conceived to contradict those injunctions of the same Law, which prohibited all connexion with their idolatrous neighbours, and all tolerance of idolaters within their own community; for it cannot be doubted, that had the Jews been expressly commanded to love their neighbours, though idolatrous, they would have mistaken the precept as a permission to tolerate their worship, and to partake their festivities. So incapable was this gross people of understanding refined distinctions, or receiving that sublime doctrine of universal benevolence, which pervades the Gospel of Christ. All however, that was possible to do, was done. The principle, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," was clearly laid down, and its operation was, by direct command, extended to all with whom a Jew was permitted to hold any permanent or close connexion; so that so far as it could serve to subdue selfish feelings, and train the mind to benevolence, by a perpetual series of benevolent actions, it was fully operative. A more universal precept, a more refined and exalted theory, would probably have led that dull and obstinate race into errors and transgressions, subversive of all the designs for which Divine Providence established the Jewish economy: It was reserved for HIM to PREPARE THE WAY, FOR WHOM that economy was designed; the EXPECTED MESSIAH, the GOD OF LOVE AND OF MERCY, to extend and enforce the principle of benevolence; to teach men to regard all human beings requiring their aid, as friends and brethren, however different their country, however opposite their faith; to teach them to love their enemies, to return blessing for cursing, and good for evil; to imitate the example of their Redeemer, who laid down his life for his friends, and in the agonies of death prayed for his persecutors. Thus it was strictly true, that the commandment of our Lord, "To love another, even as He loved us," was NEW.* New in the universality of its application, new in the all-perfect example by which it was illustrated, and new in the sanction by which it was enforced, and the pre-eminence which it obtained

* John, xiii. 34.

in the scheme of gospel duties, where it is ranked as the peculiar characteristic of the followers of Christ, and an essential condition of obtaining forgiveness from God. But the principle was recognized in the Mosaic Law, and applied as extensively as existing circumstances would permit.

It is frequently charged on the Jewish scheme, and I believe too generally and incautiously admitted, that it represents the Divinity as requiring from his worshippers, outward rites, rather than internal heartfelt piety; thus leading men to substitute the shadow for the substance, and attend more to unimportant circumstances, and superstitious observances, than to the great principles of judgment, justice and truth. That the Jews, in the decline of their religion, did so pervert and corrupt their Law by adopting such sentiments, is true; but most certain it is, they could find nothing in their original Law to justify such sentiments or practices. No: They could have found no sanction for mere external and superstitious worship, except in those traditions by which they obscured and perverted the original scheme of their religion: nothing is more cautiously guarded against in the Mosaic Code, than resting in mere outward observances; nothing was more expressly and forcibly required, than internal devotion and practical piety: the Jew was called on, "to love his God with all his heart, and all his "soul, and all his might."* "The words which I command thee "this day," says the Legislator,† "shall be in THINE HEART: "and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and talk "of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou "walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when "thou risest up." Could any thing be more remote from mere outward observance, than that heartfelt and habitual reverence for the divine commands here required? How opposite to mere ceremonious obedience is that which is enjoined in such precepts as these: "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."‡ "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my "covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above "all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be "unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."§

* Deut. vi. 5. † Ib. ver. 6 and 7. ‡ Levit. xix. 2, or xx. 7.
§ Exod. xix. 5 and 6.

The indispensable necessity of not resting in mere external observances as the means of acceptance with the Deity, appears peculiarly conspicuous, in the conditions on which alone the Jews were taught to hope for reconciliation with their God, whenever their disobedience should provoke him to banish them from the land of their inheritance, disperse them through the nations, and load them with all those punishments which their Lawgiver denounced would attend their apostacy. "It shall come "to pass," says he, "when these things are come upon thee, the "blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou "shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord "thy God hath driven thee, and shall confess your iniquity and "the iniquity of your fathers; and if therefore your UNCIRCUM-"CISED HEARTS BE HUMBLED, and you accept of the punishment "of your iniquity, and shall return unto the Lord thy God, and "shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this "day, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then "the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compas-"sion upon thee, and the Lord thy God will circumcise thine "heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy "God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou "mayest live."*

Here it is well worth observing, not only that reconciliation could be obtained only by repentance, and that no repentance, would be accepted, which did not prove its sincerity by practical reformation; but that the most important and distinguishing rite of the Jewish religion, circumcision itself, is represented as emblematic of that purity of heart, which ought to be cultivated by all who adopted this external sign; and if this was true of that rite which was the badge of the Jew's religious profession, and the seal of his covenant with God, the same principle must, by necessary inference, be applied to every subordinate rite and ceremony.† Indeed, were we to consider the

* Deut. xxx. 1, &c.

† That all the rites and sacrifices of the Jewish religion were incapable of conciliating divine favour, where internal piety was wanting, and were represented and considered in this light by the Jewish Lawgiver, is evident from the passages and observations adduced in this Lecture. It is equally certain the same principles are inculcated in every other part of the Old Testament. Vide the passages referred to in note, p. 226.

But it may be useful to show, that the most respectable Jewish uninspired writers viewed the Mosaic Ritual in the same light, acknowledged that

Hebrew Ritual distinctly, it would I am confident be easy to prove that all its rites were either commemorative of such facts, or emblematic of such dispositions, as were best calculated to

sincere piety and purity were necessary to conciliate the divine favour, and considered the various rites and ceremonies of their religion, as intended to cultivate holy and virtuous affections.

Thus Josephus,* speaking of sacrifices, says, "When we offer sacrifices to "him, we do it, not in order to surfeit ourselves and be drunken, for such "excesses are against the will of God, and would be an occasion of injuries "and luxury; but by keeping ourselves sober, orderly, and ready for our "other occupations, and being more temperate than others, and for our "duty at the sacrifices themselves, we ought in the first place to pray for "the common welfare of all, and after that for our own; for we are made "for fellowship one with another, and he who prefers the common good "before what is peculiar to himself, is above all acceptable to God:—and let "our prayers and supplications be made humbly to God, not so much that "he would give us what is good, for he hath already given that of his own "accord, and hath proposed the same publicly to all, that we may duly "receive it, and when we have received it, may preserve it."—On this passage, Whiston judiciously and truly remarks—"That we may here "observe, how known a thing it was, that sacrifices were still accompanied "with prayers;—whence came those phrases—of the sacrifice of prayer—of "praise—of thanksgiving." And he remarks, "that in Solomon's long and "famous form of devotion, at the dedication of the temple, where all sacri-"fices were to be offered up, yet there is no mention of the sacrifices them-"selves, but of prayers only." On the purification after a funeral, Josephus observes, † "That every one may thence learn to keep at a great distance "from the thoughts of being pure, if he hath been once guilty of murder." On the priests, Josephus observes, ‡ "Moses not only enjoined them to "observe purity in their sacred ministrations, but in their daily conversa-"tion, that it might be unblameable also; and on this account it is, that "they who wear the sacerdotal garments are without spot, and eminent for "their purity and sobriety, nor are they permitted to drink wine so long as "they wear those garments; moreover, they offer sacrifices that are entire "and have no defect whatsoever."

Philo, in his comments on the significancy of the dress of the priests, the sacrifices, and all the various circumstances of the Ritual, is full of the same moral and religious spirit. Indeed the inscription on the holy crown of Aaron, of HOLINESS TO THE LORD,§ naturally suggested such ideas to every pious and reflecting Israelite; and Philo has pursued them certainly often with overstrained refinement and fanciful ingenuity. But his writings show, that the enlightened Jews, when Christianity was introduced, (for Philo was cotemporary with the Apostles) were much addicted to spiritual and moral views of their Ritual and Law.

Speaking of the sprinkling the garments of Aaron and his sons, and the altar, &c. Lev. viii. 10, 11, 12, and 30, he remarks, "Moses did this, wishing "they should be holy, not only externally and visibly, but internally; since "all things, even in the interior of the temple, were purified by this holy "ointment." || On the brazen laver which had been made of brazen mirrors, he remarks, "The priests, who were about to enter the temple,

* Lib. II. contra Apion, sect. xxiv.
† Josephus, contra Apion, Lib. II. sect. xxvii.
‡ Antiquities, Lib. III. ch. xii. sect. iii.
§ Exod. xxxix. 30.
|| Philonis, Lib. III. de Vita Mosis, p. 521, *f.* and 523, *b.* I have endeavoured to translate Philo's words as closely as I could. No part of his work has been translated into English, (so far as I know) though certainly many parts deserve it.—For Josephus, I generally adopt Whiston's Translation.

form the mind to steady rectitude, internal purity, and sincere devotion. One instance as more immediately connected with this subject, I will briefly mention.*

For every transgression, the Levitical Law prescribed a trespass-offering: where the transgression was of a mere ritual precept, and committed without deliberation or design, when discovered, the trespass-offering was sufficient alone; for this shewed that the offender acknowledged the athority of the Law which he had unintentionally violated: but where the transgression included any encroachment on the rights of another, the

" were to purify themselves, washing their hands and feet as a symbol of " innocency of life, and of a pure livelihood, obtained by praiseworthy " means: and each should remember that the materials of this vessel were " mirrors; so that each should contemplate his own mind as it were in a " mirror; and if he should discover in it the turpitude of irrational affec- " tion, or the immoderate love of pleasure, or grief depressing him to excess, " or turning him from rectitude, or desire stimulating him to any thing " forbidden, he should reform and cure it, and study to acquire the pure and " genuine beauty of the mind." But all Philo's works are so full of this, especially his beautiful Tract on Philanthropy or Charity,* that it is unnecessary to multiply quotations.

The celebrated Maimonides, in his " More Nevochim," or " Instructor of those who are perplexed," a work containing many judicious and learned elucidations of Scripture difficulties, and particularly an excellent exposition of the grounds and reasons of the Mosaic Laws; and who, having published a laborious comment on the Mischna or system of Jewish traditions, may be supposed to speak the general sense of the Jewish Rabbinical doctors, has an express chapter, (Part III. ch. xxxiii.) to show, " That the " prohibition of external uncleanness and impurity, by the Law, is instrumental of and subservient to the purification of the heart;" and has these strong words: " Cleanliness of dress, washing of the body, and the removal " of all dirt and squalidness, is certainly the intention of the Law; but " subordinate to the purification of the conduct and the heart, from depraved " opinions and corrupt morals. For, to think that exterior purity, by ablu- " tions of the body and the dress, can be sufficient, though in other respects " a man indulges himself in gluttony and drunkenness, is the extremest " madness."

Such are the sentiments of this celebrated Rabbi, conformable to the obvious intention of the Law, and we may be assured, to the sentiments of all pious and reflecting Jews, in every period of their nation. Consult, on this subject, Mr. Moses Lowman, on the Hebrew Ritual. If the student wishes for a still more learned disquisition, he will find it in Maimonides More Nevochim, Part III. from chap. xxvi. to the end; Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum, Lib. I. from ch. iv. to the end, and the entire of the second book; observing, however, that the system of this learned writer is in many points successfully combated by Witsius. Vide Witsii Ægyptiaca, Lib. III. who appears to me to establish his opinion, notwithstanding that Warburton has espoused the scheme of Spencer. Vide the Fifth Lecture of this Part; also, the Divine Legation, B. IV. sect. vi.

* Vide Levit. ch. v. and vi.; also Numb. v. 7, &c.

* Vide his Works, p. 539.

trespass-offering could not be received, except it was accompanied by a public acknowledgment of the offence, a resignation of the usurped property, and a restitution to the person injured, if he or his heir could be found; if not, the usurped property was to be consecrated to pious uses, as the offender could not procure pardon while he retained it.—What regulation could point out more clearly the inefficacy of the sacrifice, where guilt was not unfeignedly repented of, and all the advantages, which had tempted to its perpetration, renounced and resigned, and where full restitution to the injured individual did not accompany humiliation before God?

Another observation on this subject, of great weight, is, that the reverence the Jew was taught his God required, is perpetually represented not as terminating in prayers and religious services alone; but as a practical principle, which was to regulate his conduct towards his neighbour, and display itself by judgment, by justice, by humanity, and particularly by shewing mercy to the poor and the stranger, the widow and the fatherless, to whom God is represented as bearing the peculiar relation of patron, protector and friend.—I might adduce numerous passages to establish this significancy of circumcision, and this practical application of the reverence due to God; but I shall content myself with one, decisive of both, even the solemn requisition of their Legislator when he recapitulates their Laws, and denounces the curses which should follow their violation, and the blessings which should reward their observance—a passage * which includes and contains all the arguments I have advanced on this topic: "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God "require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all "his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God, "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to keep the com-"mandments of the Lord thy God, and his statutes which I "command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven "and the heaven of heavens is the Lord thy God's, the earth "also with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in "thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, "even you, above all people, as it is this day. CIRCUMCISE "THEREFORE THE FORESKIN OF YOUR HEART, and be no more "stiff-necked. For the Lord your God is God of gods, a great

* Deut. x. 12, &c.

"God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, "nor taketh reward. He doth execute the judgment of the "fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him "food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger; for ye "were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the Lord "thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, "and swear by his name. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, "that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which "thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with "threescore and ten persons: and now the Lord thy God hath "made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude. Therefore "shalt thou love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and "his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments alway."

Thus on a REVIEW of the topics we have discussed, it appears that the Jewish Law promulgated the great principles of moral duty in the Decalogue, with a solemnity suited to their high pre-eminence: that it enjoined love to God with the most unceasing solicitude, and love to our neighbour, as extensively and forcibly, as the peculiar design of the Jewish economy, and the peculiar character of the Jewish people, would permit: that it impressed the deepest conviction of God's requiring, not mere external observances, but heartfelt piety, well regulated desires, and active benevolence: that it taught sacrifice could not obtain pardon without repentance, or repentance without reformation and restitution: that it described circumcision itself and by consequence, every other legal rite, as designed to typify and inculcate internal holiness, which alone could render men acceptable to God: that it represented the love of God as designed to act as a practical principle, stimulating to the constant and sincere cultivation of purity, mercy and truth: and that it enforced all these principles and precepts by sanctions the most likely to operate powerfully on minds unaccustomed to abstract speculations and remote views, even by temporal rewards and punishments; the assurance of which was confirmed from the immediate experience of similar rewards and punishments, dispensed to their enemies and to themselves, by that supernatural Power which had delivered the Hebrew nation out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness, planted them in the land of Canaan, regulated their government, distributed their possessions, and to which alone they could look to obtain new bless-

ings, or secure those already enjoyed. From all this I derive another presumptive argument for the divine authority of the Mosaic Code; and I contend, that a moral system thus perfect, promulgated at so early a period, to such a people, and enforced by such sanctions as no human power could undertake to execute, strongly bespeaks a divine original.

LECTURE III.

The Penal Code of the Jewish Law conformable to its moral and religious system—Capital crimes—Idolatry, and the various crimes connected with it—Strict prohibition of human sacrifices—Supplementary sanctions, presupposing a special Providence—Jewish constitution a Theocracy—Severity against idolatry justified—Jewish Law prohibits all impurity—yet not unnaturally austere—Disobedience to parents how punished—Wisdom of the Mosaic Law, respecting murder and manslaughter—with respect to slavery—and false witnesses—Principle of retaliation explained—Equity of punishment for the invasion of property—Mildness of Laws towards slaves—Form of trial—Consistence of the Religious and Penal Code.

EXODUS, xxi. 14.

"If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile: thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die."

In the last Lecture we reviewed the Moral Precepts of the Jewish Law, and the practical tendency of the Jewish Ritual; which appeared worthy of that divine original to which they are ascribed. But these religious commands and general principles of morality, however useful and important, could not alone be sufficient to form the character, and regulate the conduct of the nation, if unsupported by civil laws. And as the entire constitution of the Jews, civil and religious, was attributed to the same divine authority; in order to show it was not unworthy of such a sacred origin, it is necessary to examine how far the PENAL CODE* of the Jewish Law was conformable to the principles of its religious system, and the moral instructions of its Legislator.

In examining the Mosaic penal code, we find that at the head of its capital crimes was placed IDOLATRY. †Not only the act

* Consult on this subject Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xli.; and Spencer's Dissertatio de Theocratia Judaica, præcipue cap. vi. p. 204.

† Vide Maimonides More Nevochim, cap. xxxii.

itself, but every attempt to seduce men to it, and every mode of conduct which presupposed or obviously led to it. Against this offence the strictest rigour was exercised: no partiality for the dearest relative was to induce concealment; no dignity to silence accusation; no multitude of offenders to deter from punishment. "If (says the Lawgiver) thy brother, the son of thy mother, or "thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy "friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, "Let us go and serve other gods; thou shat not consent unto "him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, "neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but "thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him "to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. "And if thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, Certain men, "the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and "have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us "go and serve other gods, then shall ye enquire, and ask dili-"gently; and behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that "such abomination is wrought among you; thou shalt smite the "inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying "it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with "the edge of the sword. And thou shalt gather all the spoils "of it into the midst of the streets thereof; and shalt burn "with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof, every whit, for "the Lord thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever, it shall "never be built again."*

One species of idolatry is marked with peculiar abhorrence, that of giving their seed unto Moloch, or burning their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods. This the Deity directs to be punished with death: if the punishment is neglected, he denounces that he will himself execute vengeance, as well on the offender, as on those who designedly suffered him to escape with impunity: thus MARKING WITH PECULIAR ABHORRENCE THE EXECRABLE CUSTOM OF HUMAN SACRIFICES,† which, to the disgrace of reason and humanity, so long polluted the earth; even in nations and periods which we are accustomed to honour

* Deut. xiii. 6, &c.

† Vide Jewish Letters to Voltaire, Part III. Let. vi. Vol. II. p. 68; and Findlay's Answer to Voltaire, Part II. ch. ii. sect. vi. and vii. p. 137; and Doddridge, Lect. cxlviii. sect. 8.

with the epithets of enlightened and civilized.* Any imitation of such horrid rites in the worship of the true God, the Law thus expressly forbids: "When the Lord thy God shall cast out the "nations from before thee, take heed to thyself that thou en- "quire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve "their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so "unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination of the Lord "which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even "their sons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire to "their gods."†

On the same principle of preserving the allegiance due to the supreme Jehovah, resorting or pretending to resort to supernatural agency, in order to discover or to control future events, as it implied a dependence on inferior spirits, was a violation of allegiance to the true and only God, who declared himself the peculiar guardian of this people, ever ready to assist them in any distress, and communicate to them any necessary information as to futurity, when piously and humbly consulted according to the regulations‡ of his Law. Hence those who had (as they asserted or supposed) familiar spirits, those who practised enchantments or witchcraft, were to be punished with death.

On the same principle, the blasphemer, and the deliberate

* Vide supra, Part II. Lect. I. pp. 195, 196.

† Deut. xii. 29, &c.—Compare with this text the energy with which Jeremiah, vii. 29—34. reprobates the Jews for transgressing its prohibition: "The Lord," (says the Prophet) hath rejected and forsaken the generation "of his wrath; for the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith "the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called "by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, "which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, TO BURN THEIR SONS AND "THEIR DAUGHTERS IN THE FIRE; WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT, NEITHER "CAME IT INTO MY HEART. Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, "that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, "but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet till there be no "place. And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the "heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away. "Then will I cause to cease from the city of Judah, and from the streets of "Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the "bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate." Yet, notwithstanding the direct prohibition of the legislator, the condemnation of the Prophet, and the interposition of Providence to punish the offering of human sacrifices, infidel writers, particularly Voltaire, have had the hardihood to charge the Mosaic Law with demanding, or at least permitting them. How unreasonably, vide the works referred to in the last note.

‡ Vide Numbers ix. 7 and 8, and xxvii. 21. compared with Joshua, ix. 14. Judges, i. 1. and 2 Sam. v. 23. And consult Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, ch. xi.; and Spencer's Dissertatio Septima de Urim et Thummim.

presumptuous sabbath-breaker,* and the false prophet, as they openly shook off all reverence for the great Jehovah, were also to suffer death.

In other cases of disobedience, proceeding from similar disregard to the Divine Authority, but not manifesting itself by acts so plainly cognizable by human tribunals, the Legislator denounces, "That the perpetrators should bear their iniquity, and "should be cut off from their people:" that is, God would either cut them off from the communion of his people, and all the advantages of that covenant he had entered into with them; or he would interfere, and punish their crime by a supernatural and premature death. Thus, "if a man hide his eyes from him "who giveth his seed unto Moloch, and kill him not; then will "I set my face against that man, says the Lord, and against his "family, and will cut him off."† The Lord also threatens to cut off the man who did not afflict his soul on the great day of atonement:‡ the man who did not celebrate the Passover, or who broke its solemn regulations: these, and other actions or omissions not easily discoverable by, or proveable before human tribunals,‖ are prohibited under a similar penalty. An equally special interference of Providence, for the detection and punishment of guilt, is implied in the trial by the waters of jealousy,§ and in the penalty denounced against particular acts of impurity; that the perpetrators of them should bear their iniquity, and¶ die childless.

* Vide Numbers, xvi. 32. Deut. xvii. 12. and xviii. 20.

† Lev. xx. five first verses.

‡ Lev. xxiii. 29, 30. also Exod. xxxi. 14. of the violation of the Sabbath; Numbers, xv. 30. of the presumptuous offender; Numbers, xix. 13, of him who defiled the tabernacle; Lev. xviii. and xx. of unnatural crimes; also Numbers xix. 20. Lev. xxii. 3, and Exod. xii. 15 and 19.

‖ Vide, on the reasons of such of these precepts as relate to actions of a less criminal nature, Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xli. p. 463; and for others, cap. xxxvii. p. 447, where he notices that the prohibition, Lev. xix. 27. against rounding the corner of the hair on the head and the beard, was given, because the idolatrous priests were accustomed to use that particular tonsure. He assigns a similar reason for the precept of not using a garment of linen and woollen mixed together, Lev. xix. 19. this being a particular dress in idolatrous rites; and for the precept, Deut. xxii. 5, that the woman should not wear the dress of a man, or vice versâ. Besides its obvious tendency to preserve modesty and purity of manners, Maimonides observes, that a man dressed in a coloured female dress in honour of Venus, and a woman dressed in armour worshipping at the shrine of the statue of Mars.

§ Numbers, ch. v.—It has been well remarked, that this species of ordeal could not injure the innocent at all, or punish the guilty except by a miracle; while, in the ordeals by fire, &c. in the dark ages, the innocent could scarcely escape, but by a miracle.

¶ Levit. xx. 20.

I have thus particularly noticed the severity of the Laws against idolatry, and the peculiar circumstance, of the Mosaic code sanctioning many of its prohibitions by penalties which the direct interference of the Deity alone could inflict; because the submission to laws so severe, and the promulgation of prohibitions so sanctioned, appears unaccountable, if we do not admit the truth of the Mosaic history; which declares, that the Jewish government was founded on a solemn covenant with God, when, on Mount Horeb, the divine glory appeared to the assembled nation, and the Lord talked with them face to face out of the midst of the fire, and delivered the ten commandments, and declared unto the people: "If ye will obey my "voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a pecu- "liar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is "mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an "holy nation. And Moses came, and called all the elders of "the people, and laid before their faces all these words which "the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered and "said, All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do."* On this solemn compact was founded the Jewish government in which the Lord Jehovah appeared as the immediate sovereign, and the Jewish people his immediate subjects. Hence such prohibitions as human tribunals could not easily take cognizance of, were sanctioned by penalties which God, their sovereign, undertook to execute. Hence, no authority, by the Mosaic constitution, was vested in any one man or body of men in the Jewish Government, nor even in the whole nation assembled, to make new †Laws, or alter old ones, their sovereign, Jehovah, reserving this power to himself. Hence the Jewish constitution recognized no one hereditary chief magistrate; and no power was given to any one body, or even to the whole nation, to elect any supreme governor. It was reserved to Jehovah, their sovereign, to appoint as he pleased who was to preside under the title of judge, and with an authority delegated from him.‡ And finally

* Exod. xix. 5, &c.; also Deut. xxvi. 16, &c.

† Deut. iv. 1 and 2. and xii. 32. Vide also Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, ch. vii.: and Spencer de Theocratia Judaica, cap. i.; also Leydeker's learned work de Republica Hebræorum, Lib. V. de Theocratia Hebræorum.

‡ Vide Numbers, xxvii. 15, &c. for the appointment of Joshua; Lowman, ib. ch. x.: and Spencer de Theocratia Judaica, cap. iv. sect. iii. p. 198.

hence every act of idolatry was not only an apostacy from true religion, but an act of TREASON AGAINST THE STATE,* a breach of that original contract and charter, on which the Jewish constitution was founded, and on which the national property and privileges depended; and therefore, according to the principles of every established government in the world, merited and received capital punishment.

NEXT TO IDOLATRY, the Jewish Law seems to have condemned with peculiar emphasis, and punished with peculiar severity, ALL KINDS OF IMPURITY;† every species of incestuous connexion and unnatural crime, was punished with death. Besides, not only was forcible violation capital, as by our Law, but the violation of the marriage vow. The ADULTERER and the ADUTERESS WERE CONDEMNED TO SUFFER A PUBLIC AND IGNOMINIOUS EXECUTION. The same punishment was the consequence, where the female, though not married, was betrothed in marriage. In a word, we perceive the most anxious care to cut off every greater degree of licentiousness, and stigmatize even the least with infamy; yet never did this care degenerate into an extravagant reverence for unnatural austerity, and monastic celibacy. In every rank, from the high priest to the lowest peasant, marriage was encouraged and honorable. Our blessed Lord, indeed, has declared, that some permissions relating to marriage, granted to the Jews for the hardness of their hearts, were inconsistent with the more pure and refined morality of the Gospel;‡ yet, notwithstanding this, we perceive in the Jewish Law so strong on opposition to the usual licentiousness of Eastern manners, and so decided a superiority in this respect above the legislators and the philosophers of the heathen world, and still more above their religious institutions—as tend strongly to prove, that a system so favourable to the interests of virtue, and restraining so powerfully and yet so judiciously the excesses of passion—a system introduced at that early period, in an Eastern climate, and amongst a people accustomed

* Vide Lowman on the Civil Code of the Hebrews, ch. xii. p. 231, and ch. xii. p. 263, &c.; Warburton's Divine Leg. B. V. sect. ii.; Spencer Dissertatio de Theocratia Judaica, p. 205.

† Vide Lev. ch. xviii. and ch. xx. from ver. 10. to the end; also Deut. xxvii. from 20. and xxii. from 22. as to the punishment of adultery, &c.

‡ Vide Matt. v. 27, &c.; and xix. from 3 to 10. plainly prohibiting polygamy and divorce, which were not punishable amongst the Jews, when under certain limitations.

to be irresistibly led by objects of sense—had a higher origin than mere human wisdom; and that to secure submission to its restraints, required an interference more powerful than mere human authority.

Another crime which the Jewish Law punished with peculiar severity, was DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS. "Every one," says the Law, "that curseth his father or his mother, shall be surely "put to death."* And again, "If a man have a stubborn and "rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father, or "the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened "him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and "his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out to the elders "of his city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say "unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and re-"bellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a "drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with "stones, that he die: so shalt thou put away evil from among "you, and all Israel shall hear, and fear."† Undoubtedly, in thus enforcing filial obedience, the Jewish Law laid the foundation of every virtue. He who despises parental instruction, tramples on parental authority, and feels no gratitude for parental affection in his earlier years, will probably, as his passions strengthen, and his depraved habits grow inveterate, trample on the authority of laws both human and divine, and requite with ingratitude all the benefits which man can confer, and all the blessings which the Divinity bestows. But in establishing this important principle, we see nothing is harsh or overstrained; the parents have no such arbitrary power as under the ancient Roman Law,‡ which armed the father with the absolute right of life and death over his children, and even allowed him to sell them three times over; a power which lasted during their whole lives, or ended only with the third sale. Nor was such extreme parental power deemed unreasonable in Greece; where it was maintained, that the power of a father of a family over his slaves and his children was absolute. On the contrary, in the Jewish Law all is just and moderate.§

* Lev. xx. 9. † Deut. xxi. 18—21.

‡ Vide the Laws of the Twelve Tables, Table iv. Law the first and second; Hook's Roman History, Vol. II. p. 143.

§ Maimonides More Novechim, Pars III. cap. xli. p. 463.

The offence of cursing father or mother implied such hardened impiety, as well as such extreme contempt and malignity towards the authors of our existence, as strikes the heart with horror, and indicates the extremest moral depravity. Equally worthy of reprobation and punishment, is persevering and obstinate stubbornness and rebellion against that exercise of parental authority which would restrain drunkenness and debauchery. And when such disobedience was investigated by a solemn and public trial, and established by a judicial conviction, it surely merited infamy and death: "That all Israel should hear and "fear, and put away evil from among them."

MURDER, as it is the highest degree of malignity to which human depravity can ascend, so it was pursued with just rigour by the Jewish Law. "If a man come presumptuously "upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take "him from mine altar, that he die." * But the wisdom of the Jewish Law in securing a fair trial for this offence, so apt to rouse immediate revenge, and in providing asylums for those who were guilty not of deliberate murder, but of manslaughter, is so conspicuous, as to have attracted the notice of the most judicious modern reasoners on criminal law. Moses directed the establishment of six cities of refuge,† three on each side Jordan, at such distances as made immediate flight to some one of them easy from every part of the Jewish territory; hither the manslayer was to fly, until the action was tried: if innocent, he was to continue in the city of refuge, until the ‡ death of the high priest for the time being, when it might be supposed the passion of the friends to the deceased would have subsided. On this Law, the sagacious Montesquieu observes— "These Laws of Moses were perfectly wise. The man who "involuntarily killed another was innocent, but he was obliged "to be taken away from before the eyes of the relatives of the "deceased; Moses therefore appointed an asylum for such un- "fortunate persons. Great criminals deserved not a place of "safety, and they had none. The criminals who would resort "to the temple from all parts, might disturb divine service. If "persons who had committed manslaughter had been driven "out of the country, as was customary among the Greeks,

* Exod. xxi. 14. † Deut. xix.

‡ Numbers, xxxv. 25.

"they had reason to fear they would worship strange gods. "All these considerations made them establish cities of refuge, "where they might remain until the death of the high priest."*

On this subject it is necessary to observe, that as liberty is equally valuable with life, the Jewish Law with the strictest equity ordained, that if any man were convicted of attempting to reduce any fellow-citizen to slavery, he should be punished with death.†

The only offence not already noticed, which was capitally punished in the Mosaic code, was that of PRESUMPTUOUS DISOBEDIENCE‡ to the decision of the chief magistrate, whether high priest or judge, who should preside at the supreme national court of judicature, which gave judgment on the last appeal. The necessity of this was obvious: any man or body of men who were guilty of such contumacious resistance to the supreme authority of the state, evidently violated the original compact of national union; and declared themselves not only alienated from, but at war, as well with the whole body of the nation, as that great Jehovah, whom the Jewish people recognized as their sovereign, the author of their laws, and the head of their national confederacy.

Such were the offences punished capitally by the Jewish Law: perhaps to these we ought to add, that of bearing false witness in a case where the life of the accused was at stake: for, in all instances, the punishment to be inflicted on the false witness was the same as the mischief that would have followed, had his testimony been received as true.§

In the other penal Laws of the Mosaic code, there prevails a constant spirit of mildness and equity, I believe unequalled in any other system of jurisprudence, ancient or modern. Personal violence and assault were punished by damages, or by retaliating on the offender a punishment similar to the injury his violence had inflicted, as the judges should determine.‖ I cannot but notice here, how strangely the Jews perverted this principle of retaliation recognised by their Law; and how obstinately some

* Spirit of Laws, Book XXV. ch. iii.

† Exod. xxi. 16.

‡ Deut. xvii. 12. Vide also Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, ch. xiv.

§ Deut. xix. 16, &c.

‖ Exod. xxi. 23. Lev. xxiv. 18. Deut. xix. 19 and 21.

moderns choose to misunderstand it, as if it authorized the retaliation of injury by the arm of the individual, and made each man a judge and avenger in his own cause; a principle altogether foreign from the meaning of the Legislator. In every instance where this principle is applied, a legal tribunal was to ascertain, and the public executive power to inflict, the punishment.

One striking difference exists between the Mosaic penal code, and that, I believe, of most modern states: no injury affecting only property, was punished by death; restitution was required, or an additional fine imposed, suited to the nature of the offence; or at the utmost, if the offender was too poor to make restitution, or pay the regulated fine, he might be sold as a slave (still however within the pale of the Jewish nation;) but this slavery could not exceed seven years, as the Sabbatic year would necessarily terminate it. This difference may perhaps be accounted for, from the more equal distribution of property among the Jews; from their being more generally resident in the country, employed in agriculture, and therefore, probably partaking of that simplicity of manners, natural to such a mode of life; and from their wealth consisting more in flocks and herds, and the produce of the earth, than in money; circumstances, which would all combine to diminish the temptations, increase the difficulty, and confine the extent of depredations on property. But above all, it will be said, the Jews were not a commercial nation; and commerce it is, which renders the strictest vigilance over property and credit of every kind essential to the existence of the state. Yet, even with all these allowances, must we not confess that the Jewish Law adjusted its punishments more suitably to the real degree of moral depravity attending different species of guilt, than modern codes, which permit some of the most atrocious instances of moral turpitude to pass with trivial punishments, or none at all, while they punish even slight invasions of property with ignominious death? At all events, if private property was sufficiently secured by the milder penalties with which it was guarded under the Mosaic code, this circumstance supplies one instance of its happy operation. If, on the other hand, it be maintained, that the crimes of adultery, obstinate disobedience to parents, and perjury when intended to destroy the innocent man's life, cannot now be capitally pun-

ished, for that penal laws so extremely rigorous would never be executed, and therefore would be ineffectual; while we daily see our scaffolds loaded with criminals prosecuted and condemned for violations of property, will the conclusion be favourable to modern manners? Can we avoid suspecting, that our hearts are more anxious for money, than for virtue; and that such lenity proves we slight the crimes to which we are thus indulgent, notwithstanding the holiness of that religion we profess, rather than that we act from pure mercy to the criminal?

It further deserves to be noticed, that the penal code of the Jews guarded the person of the servant and the slave, as well as of the freeman:* that the injunction, "Whosoever smiteth "a man, that he die, shall surely be put to death,"† equally protected all. If, by an extreme severity of chastisement, the master caused the death of his slave, "he was surely to be punished:" if the violence offered maimed the servant, even so slightly as by the loss of a single tooth, he was to be recompensed by obtaining immediate freedom.‡ The chastity of female slaves was guarded by strict regulations;§ and no Jew could be a slave for longer than seven years; and at the end of that period, the Law enjoined, "When thou sendest him out "from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty. Thou shalt "furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, "and out of thy wine-press; of that wherewith the Lord thy "God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him. And thou "shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of "Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee: therefore I "command thee this thing to-day."‖ Compare such laws and regulations with the Spartans butchering the Helots in cold blood—with the Romans torturing their slaves without mercy for trifling offences, or putting whole families to death on the slightest suspicion of more atrocious guilt; or compelling them to butcher each other in gladiatorial combats, for the sport of

* Vide Jews Letters to Voltaire, Part III. Letter iv. Vol. II. p. 39, &c.; Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xxix. p. 455.; and Levis's Defence of the Old Testament, p. 68.

† Exod. xxi. 12. ‡ Ib. ver. 20 & 26.

§ Exod. xxi. 7—10. Vide also the Jew's Letters to Voltaire, Part III. Letter i. sect. iv.; and Philo de Charitate, p. 545. letter *f*. Vide on the Slaves of the Romans, Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, Book XV. ch. xi.

‖ Deut. xv. 13—15.

the populace. Compare the Mosaic regulations respecting female slaves, with the universal and abominable licentiousness which polluted every ancient nation in their intercourse with slaves;—and observe, on one side, the * rebellions of this wretched class of beings in Greece and Rome, which, while they proved the misery of the individuals, endangered the safety of the state—and on the other side, the uniform public tranquillity in this instance among the Jews; and then decide, whether such regulations at that early period, in an Asiatic nation, do not bespeak a wisdom and benevolence far superior to what we could rationally expect from a mere human Legislator.†

It may confirm us in this conclusion, to observe other circumstances connected with the administration of penal justice amongst the Jews. Their trials were public, in the gates of the city; their Judges, the Elders and Levites, were taken as our jurors, from the general mass of citizens, and therefore, like them, likely to be thoroughly acquainted with the character of the parties, the credit of the witnesses, and every circumstance which ought to be considered in determining the crime and estimating the punishment. No torture before conviction, no cruelty after it, was permitted by the Mosaic code; the law

* In the two servile wars in Sicily against the Romans, it is computed a million of slaves were destroyed, and several Roman generals were defeated. Vide Hook's Roman History, Book VII. ch. iv. Vol. VII. p. 133. Vide also the Jew's Letters to Voltaire, Part III. Letter iv. Vol. II. p. 40.—Montesquieu observes, "That in the degenerate age of the Romans, they "lived among their slaves as among enemies; they made the Syllanian Se-"natus Consultum, and other laws, which decreed, that when a master was "murdered, all the slaves under the same roof, or in any place so near the "house as to be within the hearing of a man's voice, should without distinc-"tion be condemned to die." Spirit of Laws, Book XV. ch. xvi.

† Unhappily, we may illustrate the superiority of the Jewish institution as to slaves, by comparing them with the atrocious crimes and cruelties committed in obtaining and managing slaves by the enlightened Nations of Europe in our own times; who, disregarding the benevolent spirit and clear authority of that religion they profess, persevere to accumulate on themselves and their countries such aggravated guilt, as fills the minds of the pious and reflecting with the most alarming expectation, that the signal judgments of God will awfully chastise such depravity, publicly known and nationally tolerated! May the numerous and illustrious advocates in the cause of Mercy and Christianity, so violently outraged by the miseries of the wretched Africans, every where speedily and completely effect their glorious purpose; and especially in England, where the principles of civil liberty and true religion, so generally and strongly fell, seem only to aggravate the guilt of their violation in this melancholy instance! I rejoice that the Merchants of Ireland have not (at least as far as I can discover) dis-

limited the number of stripes which might be inflicted on a criminal: "Thou shalt not punish thy brother with more than "forty stripes, lest he seem vile unto thee,"* was its injunction, at once humane and wise. It guarded innocence against the insidious attacks of false accusers, by directing that no man should be capitally convicted, except by the concurrent testimony of two unimpeached witnesses;† as well as by inflicting on the witnesses convicted of falsehood, whatever punishment or loss his testimony, if credited, would have brought down upon the innocent.

Such was the Penal Code of the Jewish Legislator. And do we not perceive that it is founded on the same principles as his moral and religious system, and that both display a spirit of wisdom, rectitude and piety, far superior to any which could naturally be expected at that early period, in an Eastern people, long debased by slavery, and exhibiting in their national character no traces of superior natural ingenuity, or intellectual refinement? Yet at that period, and in that nation, a system of morals and religion was established, which promulgated the admirable summary of moral precepts enforced in the Decalogue;‡ which inculcated love to God, love to our neighbour, kindness even to enemies; which taught the necessity of repent-

graced themselves by engaging in this dreadful traffic. It was, I understand, once proposed in a northern town of Ireland, but it was indignantly rejected.

Since the publication of the first Edition of this Work, Providence has blessed the Advocates for the abolition of the Slave Trade with that success, which their truly Christian perseverance in this Cause of Mercy so eminently merited. The English Parliament has wiped off this foul stain from their Country, and the Sons of Britain are in every part of the world the guardians of freedom, and seem prepared to be the instruments for diffusing Civilization, Christianity, and Happiness.—The continued exertions of the Society which combined to abolish the Slave Trade, and now watches to secure the execution of that glorious measure, and to repair the injuries which Europe has inflicted on Africa, by promoting the civilization and happiness of its inhabitants—The Sierra Leone Company, labouring for the same beneficent purpose—The various Societies for disseminating the Scriptures, and establishing Missions for spreading the light of the Gospel through the remotest lands—The Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews both in England and Ireland—all these supply instances of this most gratifying truth—and seem like the dawning of a brighter day now opening on those regions of the earth, which had been so long darkened by infidelity and barbarism.

* Deut. xxv. 3. † Ib. xvii. 6.

‡ Vide the two last Lectures.

ance for offences, and of restitution for injuries; which declared that God could not be conciliated by mere external observances, but that all ceremonies were intended to excite, and ought to be accompanied by, sincere purity and piety, by obedience and benevolence; and that the love of God was not to rest in mere outward worship, or even in religious feelings and devotion alone, but to operate as a practical principle, inspiring moral virtue, and rousing to active benevolence, particularly towards the stranger and the poor, the fatherless and the widow, to whom the Deity was declared to bear the relation of peculiar protector and friend.

In addition to these general religious commands and moral principles, we have examined into the PENAL CODE of the Jews. And it has, I trust, appeared, that this equally tends to guard true religion, and enforce virtuous conduct; punishing capitally, idolatry, with its train of profanations and crimes—adultery and impurity in all its pollutions, with a rigour unexampled in any nation of Asiatic origin, and yet uncultivated minds—murder—obstinate disobedience to parents—presumptuous defiance of the divine Law, and resistance to the supreme authority of the state. We have observed, that while the Jewish constitution allowed no asylum for atrocious criminals, it provided with admirable wisdom for the fair trial of those who were only guilty of manslaughter; that it punished inferior offences, whether against the person or property, with mildness and equity; that it protected the slave as well as the freeman; that in its Judges, the form of its trials, and its regulations as to witnesses, it was admirably calculated to promote justice, and to guard innocence; and that the whole scheme and universal spirit of its penal code, and its judicial system, was strictly conformable to the tenor of the religion which was taught, and the moral principles which were inculcated from divine authority. This conformity seems to me to supply a strong presumption in favour of the sacred original of the Jewish constitution, both religious and civil. A system so pious, so pure, so strict, so wise, so equitable, so humane, so superior to every thing which could naturally be expected at such a period, in such a climate, and amongst such a people, seems unaccountable, if we reject the opinion of its sacred original, and attribute it merely to human artifice and pious fraud. This conclusion will, I trust, derive

additional support from examining into the political principles of the Jewish government, and inquiring how far these were calculated to promote virtue, freedom and union in the state, and secure to every rank in society their just and natural rights. This, therefore, shall be the subject of our next inquiry.

LECTURE IV.

The political principles of the Jewish Law—Importance of the mode in which property is distributed in a state—Agrarian Law of Lycurgus, &c.—Defects of the Spartan constitution in this point—Agrarian Law among the Jews—how guarded—promoted agriculture and attachment to rural life—Jewish nobility and gentry—Jewish yeomanry sufficient for defensive war—Offensive wars effectually discouraged by the Jewish constitution—Constitution of the tribe of Levi peculiar to the Jewish scheme—Its great utility—Jewish Law guarded the rights and comforts of the very lowest classes—of the stranger—the poor—the aged and infirm—Recapitulation.

NUMBERS, xxxiii. 50, 54.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among "your families; to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the "less inheritance: according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit."

As the Scriptures ascribe not only the religious and moral part of the Jewish Law to a divine original, but also the civil code and political constitution of the Jewish government; which, it has been proved,* was a direct theocracy; it becomes necessary to examine, how far this constitution was calculated to guard the freedom and union of the Jewish state, to secure to its subjects of every rank their just and natural rights, and to diffuse a universal spirit of industry, virtue, and peace. This, therefore, shall be the object of our inquiry in this Lecture; and if it leads me to reflections which shall at first appear rather historical and political, than theological and religious, yet the close connexion of the topic with the vindication of so important a part of Revelation, as that which describes the Jewish economy, will, I trust, plead my excuse.

The mode in which property is distributed has, perhaps, the chief influence in every state in determining the character and

* Vide supra, p. 25, and the last Lecture.

effects of its constitution. Property carries with it authority and power. Where the lower classes are wholly destitute of it, they are generally dependent and servile: while those who monopolize it are too often arrogant and corrupt. If there exists no rank of citizens possessing moderate shares of it, with a secure tenure, there is little probability of finding any class of society exhibiting the purest virtues, the most useful industry, and the most independent spirit. Nor does any circumstance tend to inflame domestic feuds, or expose to foreign violence, more than an extremely unequal distribution or uncertain tenure of property.

In confirmation of these observations, I need only hint at the discord and misery which the want or the violation of an Agrarian Law produced in Rome, and the praise which has been ever given to the Agrarian Law of Lycurgus. Yet, notwithstanding the comparative superiority of the Spartan institutions in this particular, they were certainly attended with considerable defects. The division of lands was there guarded, by abolishing the use of money,* and discountenancing all commerce; regulations forced and unnatural, tending to retard all improvement, and fix the nation to that state of semi-barbarism in which the Legislator found it. Further, in order to remove the temptations to accumulate wealth, by banishing the enjoyments which usually attend it, as well as to promote the hardihood of his people, the Spartan legislator established public tables, where all the citizens fed in common, on homely food; and he wrested children from the mild superintendence of parental care, and placed them under a system of public education and rigorous discipline. These regulations produced, undoubtedly, the effect he designed; they formed a hardy multitude of citizens, who regarded the state as their common parent, and considered each other as equals. But they also tended to weaken all domestic attachments and domestic virtues—parental fondness and authority, filial love and obedience, fraternal affection, and all the amiable charities of domestic life, could have little place in such a system. But this was not yet the worst. What might have been most reasonably expected as a necessary effect of an Agrarian Law, seems to be a race of laborious peasantry, employed

* Vide Plutarch in Lycurgus, and Polybius, Lib. VI. Vide also Montague on the Rise and Fall of the ancient Republics, ch. i.

in agriculture, and possessing all that simplicity, industry, and peaceable turn of mind, which such a class of men naturally acquire. But no such existed at Sparta. The citizens, who were the proprietors of the soil, disdaining agriculture, committed the care of their lands to their slaves; they were themselves excluded from commerce, they were ignorant of letters, they possessed no amusement or occupation but their public meetings and their military exercises. Unaccustomed to peaceful arts and industry, they were ambitious of no praise, but such as arms could acquire; and this circumstance gradually led to the neglect of their legislator's institutions, and the consequent destruction of their polity. In vain did Lycurgus, when he formed all the freemen into a national militia for the defence of the state, forbid all offensive wars and all distant conquests. A nation with whom war was the sole business and the ruling passion of their lives, were too ambitious and too fierce to submit to any such restraints. They rushed into offensive wars, they extended their dominions; money was thence introduced, first for public, then for private use; luxury crept in, the Agrarian Law was violated, and the Spartan constitution overthrown.

I have thus particularly noticed the Spartan polity; because, in its great basis, the distribution of landed property, it approaches nearer than any other I know of, to the Hebrew government, which was founded on an equal Agrarian Law. For, when the Children of Israel were numbered, immediately before their entrance into the promised land, and found (exclusive of the Levites) to exceed six hundred thousand men, the Lord said unto Moses, "Unto these the land shall be divided "for an inheritance, according to the number of names. To "many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to the few "thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his "inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of "him. Notwithstanding, the land shall be divided by lot: "according to the names of the tribes of their fathers shall they "inherit."*

By this regulation, provision was made for the support of six hundred thousand yeomanry,† with from six to twenty-five

* Numbers, xxvi. 53, &c.

† Numbers, xxvi. 51, and xxxiii. 54.

acres of land each.* This land they held independent of all temporal superiors, by direct tenure from the Lord Jehovah, their Sovereign, by whose power they were to acquire their territory, and under whose protection only they could retain it. On this principle, the lands so distributed were unalienable: "The land shall not be sold for ever," says the Law, "for the "land is mine saith the Lord: ye are strangers and sojourners "with me."†

Thus the basis of the Hebrew constitution was an equal Agrarian Law. But this Law was guarded by other provisions most wise and salutary. The accumulation of debt was prevented, first by prohibiting every Jew from accepting of interest‡ from any of his fellow-citizens; next, by establishing a regular release of all debts every seventh year; and finally, by ordaining that no lands could be alienated for ever, but must, on each year of jubilee, or seventh sabbatic year, revert to the families which originally possessed them. Thus, without absolutely depriving individuals of all temporary dominion over their landed property, it re-established, every fiftieth year, that original and equal distribution of it, which was the foundation of the national polity; and as the period of such reversion was fixed and regular, all parties had due notice of the terms on which they negotiated; there was no ground for public commotion or private complaint.

One part of the regulation respecting the release in the year of jubilee, deserves our notice: it did not extend to houses in cities; these, if not redeemed within one year after they were sold, were alienated for ever.§ This circumstance must have given property in the country‖ a decided preference above property in cities, and induced every Jew to reside on and improve his land, and employ his time in the care of flocks and agriculture, which, as they had been the occupation of those revered patriarchs from whom the Jews descended, were with them the

* Vide Lowman on the Hebrew Government, ch. iv.—Vide also Cunæus de Republica Hebræorum, cap. ii.; De Lege Agraria, et inæstimabili ejus Utilitate; and Leydeker de Republica Hebræorum, Lib. V. cap. xi. xii. xiii.; and the Universal History, Vol. I. p. 617.

† Lev. xxv. 23.

‡ Ib. ver. 35, 36.; and see the entire chapter.

§ Ib. ver. 29 and 30.

‖ Vide Jew's Letters to Voltaire, Part III. Let. i. § 5, note.

most honourable of all employments.* Further, the original division of land was to the several tribes according to their families, so that each tribe was settled in the same county, and each family in the same barony or hundred. Nor was the estate of any family in one tribe permitted to pass into another, even by the marriage of an heiress.† So that, not only was the original balance of property preserved, but the closest and dearest connexions of affinity attached to each other the inhabitants of every vicinage. Thus, domestic virtue and affection had a more extensive sphere of action: the happiness of rural life was increased, a general attention to virtue and decorum was promoted, from that natural emulation which each family would feel to preserve unsullied the reputation of their vicinage; and the poor might every where expect more ready assistance, since they implored it from men, whose sympathy in their sufferings would be quickened by hereditary friendship and hereditary connexion.

But while the Jewish Agrarian Law secured the perpetual maintenance of a numerous, virtuous, and independent yeomanry, it did not prevent the existence of an higher rank of men, who should possess superior property and influence; a rank so essential to the subordination and tranquillity of social life. Such a rank of men had always existed amongst the Jews; we find them bearing their due part in the solemn act of allegiance by which all Israel submitted to the sovereignty of Jehovah: "Ye stand all of you this day," says the legislator, "before the "Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, "and your officers, and all the men of Israel; that you should "enter into covenant with the Lord your God."‡ We find repeated notice taken of the princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel; the rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, of tens, who were civil judges in lesser causes, and also entrusted with the various gradations of military command. We find twelve princes of the tribes, and fifty-eight heads of families, forming the first model of the celebrated San-

* Vide Fleury on the Manners of the Israelites, ch. iii.

† Vide Numbers, xxvii. which directs a due portion of the inheritance of their tribe to be given to the daughters of Zelophehad, he having no sons; and Numbers xxxvi. which directs the marriages of heiresses within their own tribe.

‡ Deut. xxix. 10.; also Numbers, i. and xi. 16, and xxxiv.

hedrim, and, by the divine appointment, sharing the authority of the legislator. The princes of the tribes presided at the original distribution of the lands; and the instance of Caleb, who obtained for his own portion the mountain of Hebron with its cities, proves they were attended to, as it was natural they should, in the distribution of the national property. And it has been proved by geographical researches, that the computation of territory which supposed a distribution of from sixteen to twenty-five acres* for each of the six hundred thousand yeomanry, still left an abundant overplus to supply the nobility and gentry with estates suitable to their rank, in an age and country where the most honourable personages employed themselves in agriculture, and. though hospitable and generous, were unacquainted with that expensive splendour and ostentatious magnificence, which consumes the revenues of provinces, in the erection of palaces, the support of equipages, and the indulgencies of luxury.

Another effect of the Mosaic Agrarian Law, which it is necessary to notice, was the invincible barrier which it opposed against all attacks of hostile violence, and all internal attempts on the freedom of the Jewish state. It appears, that every freeholder† was obliged to attend at the general muster of the

* Vide Lowman on the Hebrew Government, ch. iii. The *lowest* computation of the extent of the land of Judæa, makes it 160 miles in length by 110 in breadth, containing 11,264,000 acres, and giving above sixteen acres to each of the 600,000 yeomen freeholders, with an overplus of 1,264,000 acres for the Levitical cities, the princes of tribes, the heads of families, and other public uses. The authors of the Universal History state the length to have been about 70 leagues or 210 miles, the breadth about 30 leagues or 90 miles. This would give a greater extent, viz. 18,900 square miles, instead of 17,600. Vide Universal History, Vol. 1. p. 580.; and the Abbé Fleury on the Manners of the Israelites, Part II. ch. iii.

† Deut. xx. 5.—These directions to the officers to "speak to the people, "saying, What man is there of you, that hath built a new house, and hath "not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in battle, "and another man dedicate it," &c. prove two things:—First, that all were obliged to attend the summons to war, and not depart until excused by the authority of the commanders: And next, that the obligation to such attendance was not limited to the immediately approaching war on the invasion of Canaan, but was to be perpetual; for it would have been idle to talk of exempting those who had built a house and not dedicated it, or planted a vineyard and not eaten the fruits thereof, from going to war, at a time when the whole nation was collected in camp, before they had so much as entered on the land they were to settle in, and when not a single man of them (at least of nine tribes and a half) could have possessed either house or vineyard.

national army, and to serve in it as long as occasion required, except only such as could plead certain specific excuses, stated by the Law, and which were formed with a wise and benevolent attention to the natural feelings, and even to the pardonable weaknesses of the human mind. This being the condition on which all landed property was held, the Agrarian Law secured a body of six hundred thousand men enured to labour and industry, and ready to offer themselves at their country's call. And to facilitate every military array,* the princes of the tribes, the heads of families, the rulers over thousands, and hundreds, and fifties, and tens, who in peace exercised certain civil offices, united with these offices proportionable military commands, heading their respective tribes and families, and determinate portions of the militia of their vicinage. This great body of national yeomanry, in which every private landholder possessed an independent property, was commanded by men equally independent, respectable for their property, their civil authority, and, above all, their revered ancestors; and acquiring their military rank, almost by hereditary right. Such a body of men, so commanded, presented an insuperable obstacle to treacherous ambition and political intrigue, on any design to overturn the Hebrew constitution, and assume despotic power, too strong to be terrified, too opulent to be bribed, too attached to each other and to their officers to be disunited, any attempt to enslave such

* Vide Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, p. 73, from comparing Exodus xviii. 21, with Num. xxxi. 14, that the division of the people for civil purposes was exactly the same as that for military purposes. In both cases they were divided into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens, and the chiefs of these numbers are in both places expressed by the same Hebrew word, שרי; and in the Septuagint translation, the same Greek words, expressive of military command, are applied to both. It may appear an objection, that in Deut. xx. 9, it is said in our translation, "That "when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, they shall "make captains of the armies to lead the people." But the original Hebrew appears clearly to mean, that then the captains shall take their post, יפקדו, at the head of the army. With which sense the Syriac version agrees; vide Biblia Waltoni. Patrick observes (without having the present question at all in contemplation) "And if we translate the words as they may be out of "the Hebrew, they shall place or set captains of the hosts in the head or the "front of the people." The rotation of 24,000 men, appointed to attend on David every month, are described so as to indicate their being arranged by this old and familiar division; 1 Chron. xxvii. 1. "Now the Children of "Israel, after their number, the chief fathers and captains of thousands "and hundreds, and their officers," &c. Lowman quotes the authorities of Harrington, Sigonius, Menochius and Calmet; to which we may add Leydeker, p. 416, whose opinion is of great weight; and the authors of the Universal History, Book I. ch. vii. Vol. I. p. 701.

a people, or subvert a constitution so guarded, would have been the extremity of madness; and we may safely pronounce, no state ever existed where the constitution was more stable, and the national liberty more perfectly secure, than amongst the Jews, while they obeyed the statutes ordained by their inspired Legislator.

Nor were these institutions less wisely adapted to secure the state against foreign violence, and, at the same time, prevent offensive wars and remote conquests: pursuing in this, but by means infinitely more wisely contrived, and permanently effectual, the same objects which Lycurgus afterwards attempted. He in vain prohibited from engaging in offensive wars, a people who were trained to no other business than military exercises, and sought no other distinction than military glory. Far different was the effect of the Jewish Agrarian Law; it provided, indeed, a hardy body of six hundred thousand yeomanry, ever ready to protect their country when assailed; but, perpetually employed as they were in agriculture, attached to domestic life, enjoying the society of friends and relatives, by whom they were encircled, all war must have been to them in the highest degree wearisome and odious. Religion concurred with their mode of life, to prevent them from being captivated by the false splendour of military glory. On returning from battle, even if victorious, in order to bring them back to more peaceful feelings after the rage of war, the Law ordered that they should consider themselves as polluted by this perhaps necessary slaughter, and unworthy of thus appearing in the camp of Jehovah;* they were therefore to employ a whole day in purifying themselves, before they were admitted. Besides, their force was entirely infantry, the law forbidding even their kings to multiply horses in their train; and the ordinance requiring the attendance of all the males three times every year at Jerusalem, proved the intention of their Legislator to confine the nation within the limits of the promised land, and rendered long and distant wars and conquests impossible, without renouncing that religion which was incorporated with their whole civil polity, the charter by which they held all their property, and enjoyed all their rights.

In the circumstances of the Jewish polity we have hitherto considered, there is some resemblance to the institutions of sub-

* Vide Numbers, ch. xix. 13 to 16.; and xxxi. 19.

sequent Lawgivers; yet, how decided is the superiority of the Mosaic code. But in the regulations as to the tribe of Levi, we see an object pursued, which, until Christianity was established, no Lawgiver but the Jewish thought of attending to. Ministers of religion are indeed found in every state; wherever any idol was worshipped, there must have been altars and priests, there generally were soothsayers and diviners; but such men never attempted anything beyond the immediate performance of religious ceremonies, or employing that influence over the public mind, which their sacred functions gave them, to promote private gain, or, in some instances, political views; religious and moral instruction to the great mass of the people, they never attempted, and never desired. But the Jewish legislator set apart the entire tribe of Levi, one-twelfth of the nation, not merely to perform the rites and sacrifices which the ritual enjoined, (a purpose which I do not now particularly insist on) but to diffuse over the great mass of the people, religious and moral instruction, for which they were expressly set apart. "Of Levi," (says the Legislator, when in his last solemn hymn he sketches the characters and the fortunes of the different tribes) "Let "thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy holy one: they have "observed thy word, and kept thy covenant; they shall teach "Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; they shall put in-"cense before thee, and whole burnt-sacrifice upon thine altar."* To them was the custody of the sacred volume consigned, with the ark of the covenant; and Moses commanded the priests, the sons of Levi, and the elders of Israel, "At the end of every "seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the "feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before "the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose; thou "shalt read this Law before all Israel, in their hearing.† "Gather the people together, men and women and children, "and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, "and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and "observe to do all the words of this Law: and that their children

* Deut. xxxiii, 8—10.

† Among the various wise reasons for choosing this period, one most principal appears to be, its being the year of release, when the general abolition of debts and discharge from personal slavery, periodically took place; circumstances which would necessarily secure constant attention to this solemnity, and contribute to insure the observance of this command. Thus closely were the religious and civil parts of the Mosaic code connected.

"which have not known any thing, may hear and learn to fear "the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land whither "ye go to possess it."* This public and solemn periodical instruction, though eminently useful, was certainly not the entire of their duty; they were bound, from the spirit of this ordinance, to take care that at all times the aged should be improved, and the children instructed in the knowledge and the fear of God, the adoration of his Majesty, and the observance of his Law: and for this purpose the peculiar situation and privileges of the tribe of Levi, as regulated by the divine appointment, admirably fitted them. Possessed of no landed property, and supported by the tithes and offerings which they received in kind, they were little occupied with labour or secular care; deriving their maintenance from a source which would necessarily fail if the worship and the Laws of God were neglected, they were deeply interested in their support. Their cities being dispersed through all the tribes† and their families permitted to intermarry with all, they were every where at hand to admonish and instruct; exclusively possessed of the high-priesthood, as well as of all other religious offices, and ‡ associated with the high-priest and judge in the supreme court of judicature, and with the elders of every city in the inferior tribunals, and guardians of the cities of refuge where those who were guilty of homicide fled for an asylum, they must have acquired such influence and reverence amongst the people, as were necessary to secure attention to their instructions: and they were led to study the rules of moral conduct, the principles of equity, and, above all, the Mosaic code, with unceasing attention; but they were not laid under any vows of celibacy, or monastic austerity and retirement, and thus abstracted from the intercourse and the feelings of social life. Thus circumstanced, they were assuredly well calculated to answer the purpose of their institution, to preserve and consolidate the union of all the other tribes, to instruct and forward the Jews in knowledge, virtue and piety; "To teach Jacob the judgments, and Israel the Law of Jehovah;" that they might hear and fear, "and learn to obey the will of "their Sovereign and their God." And, as no more important object could be aimed at by any Lawgiver, so the almost total neglect of other legislators in this respect, and the caution and

* Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

† Numbers xxxv. ‡ Deut. xvii. 9. and xxiv. 8.

wisdom of the Jewish institutions for this purpose, seem to supply one important presumptive argument for the divine original of the Mosaic code.

Hitherto we have considered the Jewish Law chiefly as it secured the rights and promoted the happiness of the higher and middling classes of society, the nobility and gentry, the Levites, and the great mass of the Jewish yeomanry or freemen.* But the Mosaic Law extended its parental care to the very lowest classes, the stranger and the slave, the poor, the fatherless and the widow. These it represents as the peculiar objects of the divine care, and denounces against any injury to them, peculiar indignation and punishment from God. "If a stranger sojourn "with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him; but the stranger "that dwelleth among you shall be unto you as one born among "you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers "in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord thy God."† "The "tithes of the third year thou shalt give to the Levite, the "stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat "within thy gates, and be filled."‡

That part of the Hebrew constitution which forbade the acceptance of interest § from a fellow-citizen, and established a septennial abolition of debts, and a periodical restitution of all lands which had been alienated from their original proprietors, though necessary for the general balance and security of the Hebrew Government, might yet have operated to increase in some instances the pressure of poverty, by rendering it more difficult to obtain immediate relief. It is therefore important to observe, how anxiously the Legislator guards against any such effect from these regulations. "If there be among you," says the Law, "a poor man, one of thy brethren, within any of thy "gates in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou "shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy "poor brother. Nor let there be a thought in thy wicked heart, "saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand; and

* Vide the Jewish Letters, Part III. Letter iv. Universal History, B. I. ch. vii. sect. 4, on the Laws relating to the sabbatic and jubilee years, p. 613 and 617.

† Lev. xix. 33 and 34. ‡ Deut. xxvi. 12.

§ Interest from any one not a fellow-citizen, was permitted, but subject to the limitation of using him with the strictest regard to equity and benevolence, which the passages quoted in the last paragraph require.

" thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest " him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be " sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give, and thine heart shall " not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for " this thing the Lord thy God will bless thee in all that thou " puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out " of thy land; therefore, I command thee, saying, Thou shalt " open thine hand wide to thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy " needy, in thy land."*

With equal energy does the Law maintain the cause of the hired labourer: " Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that " is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy " strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. At this day " thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down " upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he " cry unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."†

Thus, also, how are the feelings as well as the wants of the poor consulted, in that precept which directed, " When thou " dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his " house to fetch his pledge:"‡ as if the Legislator said, Intrude not into his abode, if he is not willing to expose to the stranger's eye the humiliating circumstances of want and nakedness which attend his destitute state; or, perhaps there is some little monument of his better days, which he reserves to console his misery, which he would not wish the person from whom he implores aid to see, lest he should demand that in pledge, and either, if denied, refuse relief, or, by tearing away this almost sacred relic to which his heart clings, embitter his distress. No, says the Law, the hovel of the poor must be sacred as an holy asylum; the eye of scorn and the foot of pride must not dare to intrude: even the agent of mercy must not enter it abruptly and unbid, without consulting the feelings of its wretched inhabitant. " Thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge; " thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend " shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee."§

In the same strain of humanity the Law goes on: " If the " man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge. In any " case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun

* Deut. xv. 7—11.
† Ib. xxiv. ver. 14 and 15.
‡ Deut. xxiv. 10.
§ Ib. ver. 11.

"goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless "thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord "thy God."*

The same spirit of benevolence was to regulate the conduct and soften the heart of the husbandman in all his labours. "If "thou cuttest down the harvest of thy field," says the Law, "and hast forgot a sheaf, thou shalt not turn again to fetch it: "if thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the "boughs again: when thou gatherest thy grapes, thou shalt not "glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, "and the widow, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all "the work of thy hands."† With equal solicitude does the Law impress reverence for the authority, and attention to the wants of the aged, delivering as the direct command of Jehovah:— "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face "of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord."‡ How much praise have the Spartan institutions justly obtained, for cherishing this principle; yet, how much more energetic and authoritative is the language of the Jewish Lawgiver. With a similar spirit the same Lawgiver inculcates in the strongest manner the duty of shewing tenderness to those who labour under any bodily infirmity: "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put "a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I "am the Lord."§ And with a still more exalted sense of the importance of virtue above every external advantage and the proportionable obligation of promoting it in all with whom we have any intercourse, the inspired Lawgiver considers the neglecting to do so as a proof of criminal malignity: "Thou shall not hate "thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise *rebuke* thy "*neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* Thou shalt not avenge, "nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord."‖ How admirably are such language and such sentiments as these suited to the sacred original from whence they are supposed to flow! How strongly do they attest the divine benevolence, which dictated the Jewish law, and the divine authority which alone could enforce such precepts by adequate sanctions, and

* Deut. xii. 12 and 13.
† Deut. xxiv. 19—21.
‡ Levit. xix. 32.
§ Levit. xix. 14.
‖ Levit. xix. 17 and 18.

impress such sentiments upon the human heart with practical conviction! If the intermixture of such sentiments and precepts with the civil code, and the union of political regulations with moral instruction and religious observances, is unparalleled in any other country, and by any other Lawgiver—does not this circumstance afford some presumptive evidence of the divine original of the Mosaic code.

To REVIEW THE SKETCH WE HAVE EXHIBITED OF THE JEWISH CONSTITUTION, we have seen that it provided for the settlement of 600,000 freeholders, with independent properties, derived not from any human superior, but held in fee from the Sovereign of the Jewish state, even God himself. This distribution of property was guarded by preventing the accumulation of debt, and, if alienated for a time, securing its reversion to the family of the original proprietor, at regular periods. The distribution of this body of freeholders through the land, by their tribes and families, forms an additional provision for their union and happiness. They are employed in agriculture, attached to domestic life, estranged from war, but bound to assemble for their country's defence, and thus forming a secure barrier against hostile violence or insidious ambition. They are governed by a nobility, by magistrates and by elders, possessing properties suited to their several ranks, respected for their patriarchal descent, uniting in their persons civil and military authority, by an hereditary right which precluded jealousy and discord. The whole tribe of Levi is set apart to attend to the religious and moral instruction of the nation, for which they have the fullest leisure, and to which they are bound by the strongest interests; dispersed over the whole, and forming a cement and bond of union between the remaining tribes. In this domestic and family government, as it has been justly termed, population is encouraged—freedom secured—agriculture and residence in the country, and, by consequence, purity and simplicity of manners provided for—domestic virtue, reverence to the aged, kindness to the stranger, bounty to the fatherless and the widow, justice to all, are inculcated in the most forcible manner, and with the most awful sanctions, even the favour or the displeasure of the Lord Jehovah, who is the immediate Sovereign under whom this government is exercised, by whom its Laws are formed, from whom all property is held, to whose powerful interposition the nation

owed its settlement, and on whose protection it depended for its continuance. All the blessings, therefore, which the Jew enjoyed under this constitution, and by this government, ought to have had the effect of animating his gratitude and piety to God, and enlarging his benevolence to the poor and the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, those peculiar objects of the divine patronage and protection. Is not such a scheme of government worthy of the divine Author to whom it is ascribed? and does not its establishment at so early a period, and amongst a people so apparently incapable of inventing it as the Jews, strongly attest its heavenly original.

LECTURE V.

Importance of the question, whether the Jewish Ritual is opposed to the system of Heathen worship, or in any degree borrowed from it?—The latter improbable, if Judaism is of divine original; Spencer's opinion—grounded on supposed political wisdom of such a proceeding—Examples he adduces—mistaken as to these examples—as to reformation from Judaism to Christianity—and from Gentilism to Christianity—Attempt to accommodate Christianity to pre-existing customs, &c.—its mischiefs—Reformation from Popery to Protestantism—Spencer's opinion contrary to Scripture—Parts of the Jewish Ritual more ancient than Moses—Origin of circumcision—Designed contrast between Judaism and idolatry—Jewish Ritual a barrier against idolatry, proved by experience—Josephus—Tacitus—Spencer's opinion supported by insufficient evidence—How far Judaism resembled idolatry—Instances of contrast—Minuteness of Ritual, how useful—and its sanctuary, priests, &c.—Ritual not burthensome.

ORIGINALITY AND DESIGN OF THE JEWISH RITUAL.

In the preceding Lectures an attempt has beeen made to contrast the theological, moral, and political principles of the Mosaic Law, with the idolatries and corruptions almost universally prevalent at the period of its promulgation, as well as with the carnal temper and short-sighted views of the Jewish people, and their proneness to imitate the worship, and sink into the corruptions of their idolatrous neighbours. And it has been inferred, that the establishment of such a system, at such a period, amongst a people so apparently incapable of inventing it, as the Jews, and so evidently unwilling to submit to it, strongly attests its heavenly original.—In the prosecution of this argument, I did not judge it necessary minutely to examine a question which has been agitated by writers of considerable note,—How far the apparent resemblance between certain parts of the Jewish Ritual, and certain practices of the Egyptians,

and other idolatrous nations, should induce a doubt of the originality of the Jewish Law, and lead us to believe that the Legislator of the Hebrews borrowed many of his rights from the practice of the Egyptians, and others of the surrounding nations, in order to accommodate his Ritual to the habits and propensities of his countrymen, by preserving a similarity between his institutions and those idolatrous rites and customs to which they had been familiarized and attached; many of which he, in a great measure, retained, (as these writers suppose) only altering them so far as to change their object, appropriating them to the service of the true God, and blending them with the rites which originated solely in the divine appointment. Some judicious and candid critics have considered my omitting to notice this question, as a defect in this work; and in deference to their judgment, I feel myself called on to advert to it as far as I judge it necessary in my present view of the subject.

In the first place, then, if the principles and reasonings adduced in the preceding Lectures, and confirmed in those which follow, are just and conclusive, the supposition which we are now considering, becomes totally superfluous, and even in the highest degree improbable. If the great Jehovah, the moral Governor of the world, did in reality separate the Jewish nation to be the depositaries of true religion and sound morality, in the midst of an idolatrous world, and for this purpose brought them forth out of Egypt by a series of stupendous and uncontrolled miracles; if he promulgated to them the Moral Law of the Decalogue, with the most awful display of divine power and majesty; if he established over them, as their form of national government, a Theocracy, which could not be supported without the continued interposition of an extraordinary providence; if he retained them in the wilderness for forty years, to discipline and instruct them, until the entire generation, which had been familiarized to the idolatry and corruptions of Egypt, had perished; and if he then planted them in the land of Canaan by a supernatural power, driving out before them its inhabitants, or compelling the Jews to exterminate them, as a punishment for their inveterate idolatry and its attendant crimes, commanding them carefully to avoid all similar profanation and guilt, under the terror of suffering similar

punishment;—if these facts have been established, so as to prove that the Jewish Lawgiver was clearly delegated by God to institute a particular form of worship, with a variety of regulations and rites, to preserve the separation of this chosen people from the surrounding nations;—then the supposition, that he should borrow any thing from these rites and customs, in order to accommodate his system to the prejudices, habits, and propensities of his countrymen, becomes unnecessary, in proportion as we more clearly discern that he possessed authority to conciliate attention and enforce obedience without resorting to any such artifice. And if such an expedient was unnecessary, surely its adoption is extremely improbable. Thus to blend divine appointments and human inventions; to degrade the worship of the great Jehovah with the intermixture of rites, originally designed to honour the basest idols; to reprobate the whole sytem of idolatry, all its profanations and crimes, with the most vehement and indiscriminate condemnation, and prohibit every attempt to introduce any part of it, under the severest penalties; and yet secretly, as it were, pilfer from it some of its most attractive charms, varnish them with a new colouring, and exhibit them as the genuine features of true religion; this seems altogether irreconcileable with the dignity of an inspired Legislator, and the purity of a divine Law, and indeed forms a scheme so jarring and inconsistent, that it appears utterly incredible it should be adopted by Divine Wisdom.

The learned * Spencer, the most distinguished champion for this opinion, of the rites of the Jewish Law having been borrowed from those of the Gentiles, especially the Egyptians, argues from the political wisdom of such a gradual reformation, by grafting new institutions on customs already familiarized; and he adduces examples from "the triple reformation, first "from Judaism to Christianity; next from Gentilism to Chris-"tianity; and lastly, from Popery to Protestantism: in each of "which (as he truly alleges) many instances occur, in which "the rites of the old religion were retained or imitated in the "new." † But in this reasoning he seems entirely to overlook the real bearing of the very examples he adduces. Christianity

* Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum, Lib. III. Hoge Comitum—A. D. 1686.
† Spencer, ut supra, Lib. III. cap. ii. sect. 4. p. 27.

borrowed from Judaism, because it was the completion of that system which in Judaism had been begun. Christ came, "not "to destroy the Law and the prophets, but to fulfil them." * Hence the moral precepts of the Old Testament were preserved and perfected in the New; the rites and ceremonies of the Law were typical of the grand events and leading truths of the Gospel; and the chief festivals of the Jewish Church were succeeded and superseded by corresponding festivals in the Christian. But the moment that human prejudice in favour of ancient usages would have overstepped the bounds prescribed by scriptural truth, and obtruded upon Christians the observances of a national and ceremonial Law, inconsistent with the character of a universal religion and a purely spiritual worship, that moment Divine Wisdom interposed its direct prohibition against an abuse so mistaken and so mischievous. † And can we suppose the same wisdom would have acted so opposite a part at the establishment of the Jewish Law, as to permit this chosen people to receive by divine appointment a Ritual, which, by its similarity to idolatrous rites, could scarcely fail to make them regard such profanations with respect, and throw in their way a most seductive temptation to imitate them more extensively?—Human policy, short-sighted in its views and defective in its authority, might, to facilitate its immediate objects, find it necessary to employ an expedient attended with so much future hazard; but surely this were unworthy of a Divine Lawgiver.

The second example appealed to by Spencer—the reformation from Gentilism to Christianity, as conducted by the well meaning, but weak and mistaken men, who influenced the proceedings of the Western Church in the fifth and sixth centuries, exhibits a memorable and melancholy instance of the corruptions originating from thus preferring the crooked artifices of human policy, to the plain dictates of divine truth. From what other source than this were derived the errors and idolatries adopted and sanctioned by the Church of Rome?‡ which, for so many ages obscured and disgraced the whole system of the Christian faith, till the wise and manly zeal of the Protestant Reformers tore off this disfiguring mask of Paganism, and again exhibited

* Matt. v. 17. † Acts, x. xi. & xv.

‡ Vide Middleton's Comparison of Popery and Paganism, 4th edit. Lond. 1741.

the unadulterated beauties of genuine Christianity, to attract the admiration and command the reverence of mankind.—But, says Spencer,* even in this reformation, many of the principles and usages of the Romish Church were retained, and the progress of that reformation thus accelerated. True; the Christian world will always remember with gratitude, that though the Roman Church introduced many most injurious innovations, and loaded Christianity with a multitude of errors and superstitions, still she preserved all the great truths of the Gospel, and handed down to posterity many of the most valuable rites and usages of antiquity. These therefore it became the duty and the wisdom of the Reformers to retain, and only to reject those novelties and corruptions which artifice and superstition had introduced. And admirably indeed did the venerable founders of the Church of England execute this important discrimination. But they succeeded, because they made it their object to clear the divine Law from all intermixture of human depravation; not, as Spencer supposes of the inspired Lawgiver of the *Jews*, to debase the divine institutions to the level of idolatrous profanations.

But if the patrons of this system cannot defend it, as being evidently reasonable and useful, and recommended by examples of sufficient authority; still less can they support it by the authority of Scripture. Its greatest advocate indeed acknowledges, "It is no where in Scripture asserted in express words, that the "rites used among the Heathens gave occasion to any of the "Jewish institutions." He adds this reason for such silence: "perhaps because this circumstance could easily be discerned "by men of more penetrating sagacity; or because, if God had "openly declared this origin and reason of the Mosaic Laws, "they would have fallen into contempt with the vulgar part of "mankind, who are wont to despise what is plain, and revere "only what is mystical and obscure."† It is obvious to mark how inconsistent this observation is with the general scheme of this writer. The sole purpose of such imitation of Heathen rites, is supposed to be its tendency to attach the multitude by the adoption of customs to which they were already familiarized. Could it produce this effect, if it was not discernible by that

* Ut supra, Lib. III. cap. iii. sect. 4. p. 27.

† Spencer, Lib. III. cap. i. initio.

multitude? or if discerned, it would expose the Law to contempt. Or could the similarity be obvious, and the design to imitate unseen? Spencer however affirms, that, though it is not directly asserted, it is not obscurely intimated by some passages of Holy Writ; and at the head of these he places the sublime appeal of the Jewish Lawgiver to his people:—"What "nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as "the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? "And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and "judgments so righteous, as all this Law which I set before you "this day?" *—"In this passage," says this learned writer, "Moses, in order to attach the Jews to God and his institu-"tions, may be considered as thus addressing them—I know "that you earnestly desire a God, not hid in clouds or removed "to a distance from you, and to be perceived only by the "mind's eye, but a God who may prove his presence by prodi-"gies, oracles, and illustrious signs, and almost exhibit himself "to your sight. I know that you look with a desiring eye on "the manners and sacred rites of other nations, and that nothing "can be more grateful to you, than that you, like other nations, "should have a religion full of rites and observances. And "assuredly God has proved so compliant and indulgent to your "desires and wishes, that I now confidently ask you, What "nation is there which hath its gods so near, or exhibiting to "their worshippers such illustrious proofs of their presence and "their favour? And if you view the institutions of foreign "nations, learn, even such of you as regard with the greatest "partiality and attachment the rites of other religions, what "nation is there which celebrates the worship of the Divinity "with rites so conspicuous for purity, dignity and splendour; "for we do not worship the supreme and glorious God with "that barbarous mixture of ceremonies, in which the ignorance "and superstition of the Heathens had combined so many "things ridiculous and impure, but with rites amended, and "that have undergone the correction of the most wise God, "which are yet retained in the worship of the Heathens entire "and without any correction." The latter part of this paraphrase, containing the peculiarity of this author's opinion (which I cannot but deem erroneous) assuredly receives no sup-

* Deut. iv. 7 & 8.

port from the passage of Scripture on which he here attempts to found it. Indeed were I to select a passage decidedly contrasting the whole Mosaic Law with the religions of every surrounding nation, it would be the entire chapter from whence this is selected. With what energy does the inspired Lawgiver warn his countrymen to hearken to the statutes of their God, statutes which they were not to presume, in the least degree, to alter—"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, "neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the "commandments of the Lord your God."* With what solemnity does he caution them against the impure and seductive profanation of Baal-Peor, which had already brought down upon them the wrath of God;†—against the use of every graven image, as a similitude of the Divinity;‡—against the adoration of the sun and moon, and host of heaven,§ which at that period was so universal in a deluded world. How incredible is it, that while every principle and species of idolatry is thus reprobated and condemned, any practices or ceremonies of that very idolatry should be adopted and consecrated in the worsip of the great Jehovah. The more we examine the Mosaic institutions, the more strikingly conspicuous do the characters of originality and designed contrast to the principles and rites of idolatry appear; as far at least as I can investigate or judge of them. It is true, some parts of the Jewish religion derived their origin from an authority more ancient than that of Moses: the observance of the Sabbath appears to have been coeval with the creation, and the use of sacrifice to have been instituted by God immediately after the Fall. ‖ These, therefore, it is perfectly natural to suppose had been received by other nations from the remotest antiquity, and when adopted into the Mosaic institutions, it was only requisite to free them from the superstitions and corruptions with which they had been blended, restore them to their original purity, and direct them to their true object. The rite of circumcision had been the peculiar seal of the covenant with Abraham, had been given four hundred years before the Mosaic Law, had been received by all the numerous descen-

* Deut. iv. 2. † Ib. ver. 3. ‡ Ib. ver. 16. § Ib. ver. 19.

‖ Vide Gen. iii. 21. and iv. 3 & 4; and on this subject Dr. Magee's very able and learned Work on Atonement and Sacrifice, Disc. II. with the proofs and illustrations, 2d. edit. Dublin, 1809.

dants of that illustrious patriarch, and may have been recommended even to others, who were not his descendants, by the fame of his wisdom and sanctity, and his distinguished prosperity and success. But to suppose, as has been argued,* that it was not to him an original and peculiar divine appointment, is to reject equally probability and Scripture. How could it have been given as the token of the covenant newly established by God with the patriarch, if it had been long in use with nations excluded from that covenant? Why provide that every stranger should submit to this rite, in order to be naturalized amongst the Hebrews, if it were already in use amongst a multitude of strangers? In short, the supposition is utterly unfounded and untenable. But its defenders allege, that circumcision was in use amongst the priests of Egypt; and affirm that they were too proud to borrow it from any other people, much less from a nation of slaves.† We may answer, that there were two periods when the pride of the Egyptians may easily have been induced to borrow this rite even from the Hebrews; the first, during the exhaltation of Joseph, who intermarried with the family of the priests of the supreme Egyptian deity, On, and the adoption of whose religious principles was so strongly recommended by the hope of thus sharing his distinguished power of penetrating into the secrets of futurity;—and again, when the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, closing the series of sufferings which had nearly destroyed Egypt, may have easily induced the terrified survivors to attempt averting the wrath of the all-powerful and victorious God of the Hebrews, by adopting, as an honorary badge of their priesthood, the seal of his followers. Surely this or almost any mode of accounting for the Egyptians having adopted this rite, is more probable than that the great Jehovah should borrow from idolaters such a practice (as circumcision) to form the right of admission into his church, and the distinguishing characteristic of his worshippers.

* Vide these arguments, collected and compared with those supporting the opposite opinion, by Spencer, Lib. I. cap. iv. sect. 4.—On this point, Spencer, though supporting the opinion, that Abraham first received this rite from a divine appointment, Lib. I. cap. iv. sect. 2. initio, with what appear to me decisive proofs, yet declines giving any positive determination of his own.

† Spencer, Lib. I. cap. iv. p. 31.

In truth, the whole tenor of the Jewish Law exhibits not a studied imitation, but a studied opposition to the principles and rites of idolatry. That law required the worship of the one true God exclusively; idolatry worshipped a rabble of deities. The Law proscribed all use of images, or resemblances of any creature, as emblems of the Divinity; idolatry multiplied them. The Law abhorred and condemned all impure rites and all human sacrifices; idolatry too frequently employed them. The Law forbad all necromancy and divination;* it made no use of the inspection of the entrails of victims, or the observation of the flight of birds, to discover future events; it relied for this, when necessary, on the divine oracle consulted by public authority, and answering from the sanctuary, when the divine glory was displayed, by a distinct and audible voice.† The Law forbad a variety of practices, in themselves apparently innocent, but which we know were employed in the superstitions of idolatry; such as worshipping in high places or in consecrated groves. Thus Maimonides‡ notices that the prohibition against rounding the corners of the hair on the head and the beard§ was given because the idolatrous priests were accustomed to use that particular tonsure. He assigns a similar reason for not making

* Deut. xviii. 9—12.

† During the life of Moses, the oracle answered by a distinct and audible voice: Vide Numbers, vii. 89. Joshua was to stand before the High Priest, who was to "ask counsel for him by the judgment of Urim before the Lord." Numb. xxvii. 21.—Interpreters have differed in explaining this passage; to me it appears to mean, that the High Priest was to put on his sacred robe whenever he was to consult the oracle, as it would be criminal to enter the sanctuary, except he was thus robed. The distinguishing ornament of this robe was the breastplate, containing the Urim and Thummim; that is, as I conceive, the twelve precious stones containing the names of the twelve tribes, as whose representative the High Priest appeared when thus consulting on some question of a national concern; when so consulting, he appears to have been accompanied by the supreme judge, at whose instance the oracle was resorted to; and it appears to me the response was delivered by an audible voice.—Compare Exod. xxviii. from verse 15 to the end, with Exod. xxxix. 8 to 22; Levit. viii. 8. Compare also 1 Samuel, xxiii. 9 to 12. and xxx. 7.; 2 Samuel, v. 23.; also Judges, i. 1. and the entire ch. xx. See on this subject, Lowman on the Hebrew Govern. ch. xi.; Spencer, Lib. III. dissert. vii. de Urim & Thummim, particularly the 2d section. In his opinions on this subject, Spencer has adopted an hypothesis as to the nature of the Urim and Thummim, which appears to me most contrary to truth and Scripture, and to be fully confuted by Witsius in his Ægyptiaca, Lib. II. cap. x. xi. xii. Lib. III. cap. xi.

‡ Vide Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xli. p. 463; and for others, cap. xxxvii. p. 447.

§ Lev. xix. 27.

a garment of linen and woollen mixed together,* this being a particular dress in idolatrous rites. Hence also he accounts for the prohibition against eating the fruits of the trees they should find in the land of Canaan for three years,† which by the planters had been consecrated to idols. Thus also idolaters were brought to believe that it was acceptable to their gods to sow the ground on particular occasions with certain mixtures of seeds, which was therefore prohibited.‡ Idolaters were accustomed to use blood in consulting the dead, to consecrate bats§ and mice, and other insects, as a sacrifice to the sun; these, therefore, were pronounced unclean. Indeed Spencer‖ has himself distinctly shewn that many of those precepts which at first view might appear trivial or irrational, were indispensably necessary to check the idolatry of the Sabeans, who worshipped the sun, and moon, and stars; and it is abundantly evident that all the peculiarities of the Ritual, as to its rites, sacrifices and purifications, and its distinctions between things clean and unclean, contributed to guard against the infection of idolatry; not only by an opposition of rites and sacrifices, which would make the worshippers of Jehovah regard with habitual horror and contempt the rites and sacrifices of idolaters, but by establishing a similar opposition even in the customs of common life, and the use of even daily food, which would render all familiar intercourse between the peculiar people of Jehovah and idolaters impracticable. This effect really followed wherever these precepts of the Law were observed. Thus, according to Josephus,¶ when the Midianite women are represented as conferring with the young men whom their beauty had captivated, stating their fears of being forsaken by their lovers, and receiving their assurances of attachment, they go on, "If then," said they, "this be your resolution, not to forsake us, since you make use "of such customs and conduct of life as are entirely different "from all other men, insomuch that your kinds of food are "peculiar to yourselves, and your kinds of drink not common

* Lev. ver. 19. † Ib. ver. 23. ‡ Ib. ver. 19.

§ Lev. xi.—Vide also Patrick on Lev. xi. 19. Deut. xiv. and the corresponding passages.

‖ Vide Spencer, Lib. I. from ch. v. to xi. and the entire 2d Book.—Consult also Lowman on the Hebrew Ritual, Part I. ch. ii. pp. 34, 44, & 45. and ch. iii. p. 53. with Part II. ch. iii. iv. & v.

¶ Joseph. Antiq. B. IV. ch. vi. sect. 8.

" to others, it will be absolutely necessary, if you would have " us for your wives, that you worship our gods; nor can there " be any other demonstration of the kindness which you say " you already have and promise to have hereafter for us, than " this, that you worship the same gods that we do. For has " any one reason to complain that, now you are come into this " country, you should worship the proper gods of the same " country, especially while our gods are common to all men, " and yours such as belong to nobody else but yourselves? So " they said they must either come into such methods of worship " as all others came into, or else they must look out for another " world, wherein they may live by themselves, according to " their own laws." The same feeling of aversion and contempt from this studied opposition, not only in religious rites but in the customs of common life, was universal amongst the heathens towards the Jews. Tacitus,* in his eloquent but ignorant and gross misrepresentation of their origin and manners, expresses it strongly: "Moses," (says he) " that he might attach the " nation for ever to himself, introduced rites new and in oppo- " sition to the rest of mankind: all things we hold sacred, are " there profane; and what we deem abominable, are with them " permitted." And again, " they slaughter the ram in sacrifice, " as if in contempt of Ammon; and they also offer up an ox, " which the Egyptians worship under the name of Apis." The decided feeling of opposition and hostility which the whole Jewish system excited, not merely in the vulgar, but in the most enlightened heathens, is evident in the passage already quoted from this philosophic historian: and still more in those which follow, where he terms their " rites perverse and polluted;" and while he remarks the good faith and benevolence for which they were noted in their intercourse with each other, charges them " with an hostile hatred towards the rest of mankind,"— and declares that " those who adopt their principles and cus- " toms, not only use circumcision, but are taught to despise " their own gods, to renounce their country, and to hold in con- " tempt brothers, children, parents." And though he observes a similitude between the Jewish ideas of a future state, and the Egyptian opinions, he gives this noble testimony of the superiority of the Jewish theology: " With regard to the gods (says

* Historiarum, Lib. V. sect. 4.

he) their opinions are directly opposite: the Egyptians set up "and adore a number of animals and graven images; the Jews "conceive the Divinity as one, and to be understood only by "the mind: they deem those profane, who form any images of "the gods, of perishable materials, and after the likeness of "men: the Divinity they describe as supreme, eternal, un-"changeable, imperishable; hence there are no images in their "cities or their temples: with these they would not flatter "kings, or honour Cæsars." How illustrious this testimony; how strange that this sagacious historian could not perceive how grossly he contradicted himself, when, notwithstanding this, he countenanced the vulgar calumny of an ass's head having been found in the most holy place; and when afterwards, comparing the Jewish rites with those of Bacchus, he speaks of these as festive and cheerful, while he brands the religion of the Jews as sordid and absurd. So necessary was the authority of an acknowledged Revelation to give the truths of religion, even amongst the most enlightened heathens, their due weight and practical influence; and so decided was the contrast between not only the general principles of Judaism and idolatry, but also the particular rites of each—a contrast by which the Jewish Ritual so effectually contributed to the end for which it was originally designed, even to serve as a partition-wall to separate the chosen people of God from the surrounding nations, and form a barrier against the corruptions of heathenism—a purpose with which the supposition, that it borrowed and consecrated many of these rites and practices, appears to be entirely inconsistent.

The evidence on which this supposition is founded, has been proved to be as inconclusive as the supposition itself appears to be improbable.—Witsius* has shewn, with a clearness which renders it altogether unnecessary to discuss the subject afresh, that the authors on whose testimony the superior antiquity of the Egyptian religion has been maintained, and who have asserted or supposed that the Mosaic Law derived from this source many of its principles and rites, lived so long after the facts,

* Witsii Ægyptiaca, Lib. III. cap. i.; this examines the credibility of the authors relied upon by Spencer, cap. ii. iii. iv. & v.; adduces the testimony of antiquity in proof that Heathenism borrowed Judaism, not Judaism from Heathenism; which he establishes in a variety of instances, and by very strong proofs.

were so grossly ignorant of the Jewish history and system, so rash or so prejudiced, that their testimony can have no authority to obtain credit, not merely, as he expresses it, with a strict investigator of antiquity, but "even with any man of plain sense and moderate erudition."* In truth, the fancied resemblance between the rites of Judaism and idolatry amounts to little more than this, that in both were priests, temples, altars, sacrifices, festivals, calculated to catch the attention, captivate the senses, and engage the imaginations of the worshippers, by their splendour or their solemnity. But we have sufficiently proved that these were all directed to opposite objects of worship, the former to the one supreme God, the latter to the basest idols; and as the objects of worship, so the rites employed, we have seen, were designedly contrasted, and, so far from imitating idolatrous practices, any thing similar to such was strictly forbidden, even in particulars of themselves clearly innocent, as in worshipping in groves or on high places.

Should it be asked, why should an inspired Lawgiver, instead of a simple and purely spiritual worship, adopt a Ritual, thus, in the variety and the splendour attending it, bearing even a remote resemblance to the more gross inventions of idolatry? it may be answered, that the Jewish Ritual, with its temple, its festivals, its priests, its sacrifices, its distinctions of food, its purifications, &c. &c. not only served as a barrier against idolatry, but contributed to give the true religion dignity and attraction in the estimation both of strangers and of the Jews themselves; it marked out the Hebrew nation as a holy people, a nation of priests to Jehovah their God and King; it attached them to their religion by the habitual association of festive rites, of national exaltation and prosperity; it engaged their imagination and their senses, made them feel the necessity of circumspection and purity when they approached the presence of God, and by all these means formed some counterpoise to the seductions of idolatry. On this subject Josephus well observes,† "All our actions and studies, and all our words, in Moses's set-"tlement, have a reference to piety towards God; for he hath "left none of these things in suspense or undetermined. For "there are two sorts of ways of coming at any kind of learn-

* Witsius, Lib. III. cap. i. sect. 2.

† Joseph. contra Apion. Lib. II. sect. 17 & 18.

"ing, and a moral conduct of life; the one is by instruction in "words, the other by practical exercises." He then observes, "the Lacedæmonians and Cretans taught by practical exercise, "and not by words; that the Athenians and the other Grecians "made laws, but had no regard to exercising them in practice. "But for our legislator (says he) he very carefully joined these "two methods of instruction together, for he neither left these "practical exercises to go on without verbal instruction, nor did "he permit the hearing of the Law to proceed without the ex- "ercises for practice; but beginning immediately from the ear- "liest infancy, and the appointment of every one's diet, he left "nothing of the smallest consequence to be done at the pleasure "and disposal of the person himself. Accordingly he made a "fixed rule of Law, what sorts of food they should abstain "from, and what they should make use of; as also, what com- "munion they should have with others, what great diligence "they should use in their occupations, and what times of rest "should be interposed, &c. And he demonstrated the Law to "be the best and the most necessary instruction of all others, "permitting the people to leave off their other employments, "and to assemble together for the hearing of the Law, and "learning it exactly; and this not once or twice, or oftener, "but every week; which thing all the other legislators seem to "have neglected." It is further to be remarked, that the appointment of the tabernacles first, and of the temple afterwards, as the sanctuary where Jehovah the God and King of Israel would manifest his presence by a visible display of his glory, and give answers to the public and solemn applications, made through the high-priest, to discover the will of this the supreme Sovereign of the Hebrew nation, gave rise to many peculiarities of the Jewish Ritual. Hence the solemn worship of the whole church was to be directed to that place where Jehovah dwelt; and it was therefore declared unlawful, by this Ritual, to have any altar, or to offer any sacrifice, but before this presence, in honour of which the Ritual appoints the magnificence of the temple, of the holy and most holy place, and the religious respect with which they were to be approached. For the same reason the Ritual appoints so many priests as servants to attend on the presence, and to minister before the Lord Jehovah, who were to be invested in their sacred office by many solemn rites

of consecration, and distinguished by a peculiar and splendid dress.* This honour, continues Lowman, which ought to distinguish Jehovah as above all gods, in the perfections of his nature and supreme authority, is further well expressed by the whole ceremonial of the sacrificial rites, whether we consider the things that were to be offered, or the persons who were to offer them, the several kinds of sacrifices, whole burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, sin and trespass-offerings, which were to honor God as the supreme governor of the world, as forgiving iniquities, transgressions and sins, as the author of all blessings, spiritual and temporal. These are plainly designed to give unto Jehovah, as their God, the glory due unto his name. Thus all the ritual holiness is manifestly designed for the same end, that "they might be an holy people, as their God was an holy God."† Hence the ritual distinctions of unclean foods and of several pollutions, as well as the ritual purifications after legal uncleanness, expressed a due honour to the presence of Jehovah; constantly representing how fit, how becoming it was, for those who were honored with the nearest approach to this presence, to keep themselves pure, purged from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that they might honorably serve so pure and so holy a God.

I will close my remarks on this subject, by removing a very ill-grounded prejudice, too frequently entertained, against the Jewish Ritual, as a system intolerably burthensome. I observe, with Lowman,‡ that it is the ritual of a national, and not a personal worship: the whole worship of the Hebrew church, in their sacrifices and festivals, was fixed to the one temple and one altar, at the place where Jehovah dwelt; and it was absolutely forbid upon any pretence to offer any sacrifice on any occasion, but before the Divine Presence or the Shechinah. It was not, then, directed as personal, or as a family worship, or as more public in their towns or cities, throughout their whole land. So great reason there is, to distinguish between their synagogue and their temple worship. As to the general form of devotion, it seems to have been provided for by dispersing the Levites through every part of the Hebrew territory, in order to "teach

* Vide Lowman on the Hebrew Worship, p. 253.

† Vide Levit. xi. 44 & 45.; and many other passages.

‡ Lowman on the Heb. Worship, p. 203.

Jacob the judgments, and Israel the law of their God,"* by setting apart the Sabbath for a day of holy rest, when they might receive public instruction, meet for the purposes of public prayer, and when both in public and in private they would have leisure to fulfil the strict injunction of their God, not only to keep his laws in their heart, but "thou shalt teach them diligently unto "thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in "thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when "thou liest down, and when thou risest up."† But the particular mode of doing this, the methods of diffusing religious knowledge, as well as for prayers and praises in their synagogues, seem to have been left to the ancient customs of the patriarchal religion, and to be directed by the common rules of reason and discretion; for the Ritual gave no other directions about them, than those general ones above stated; and we know that the mode of worship adopted in the Jewish synagogues, subsequent to the captivity, differed but little from the present worship of Christian assemblies, for it consisted of three parts, reading the Scriptures, prayers, and preaching. But the ritual of the temple worship was only to be used personally, when the Jews were to appear before the presence of Jehovah. In this view, all objections against the Jewish Ritual as personally burthensome, tedious, or expensive, evidently appear to be wholly founded in ignorance and error: while, as a system of national worship, it was most wisely adapted to the great designs of the Jewish œconomy, even to preserve the Law, and the worship of the great Jehovah, in the Jewish race, and prepare the way for the promised MESSIAH, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

* Deut. xxxiii. 10. † Ib. vi. 7.

PART III.

A REVIEW OF THE CHIEF EFFECTS OF JUDAISM, AS CONNECTED WITH, AND PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY:

In examining which, many of the principal Objections which have been advanced against the divine original of the Mosaic Law are considered.

LECTURE I.

SECT. I.—*The Objection arising from the treatment of the Canaanites considered, so far as relates to the Canaanites themselves—Objection includes two questions—Doubt as to the extent of the severity exercised against the Canaanites—This severity justified by their crimes—Their idolatry not an error of judgment alone—Cruelties and pollutions it produced—Necessity of expelling them from the land in which the Jews were to settle—Their guilt incorrigible—The objection proved to lead to Atheism—Analogy between the general course of Providence, and the treatment of the Canaanites—In the sufferings of the innocent—Connection of this measure with the entire scheme of the Divine economy—Review of the considerations offered on the first part of the objection.*

SECT. II.—*Second part of the objection which relates to the Jews—A clear divine command changes the moral character of the action—Jews mere instruments in the hands of God—Series of facts proving this—Jews not actuated by the common passions of conquerors—Avarice and licentiousness checked by the situation in which they were placed—And sanguinary passions—Abhorrence of idolatry impressed upon them, but not a spirit of personal or national hostility—Proved by their conduct to the Canaanites—Necessity of employing the Jews as instruments of this severity—to alienate the two nations—to overturn the grand support of idolatry—to impress a salutary terror on the Jews themselves—to supersede the necessity of a continued series of miracles—Treatment of the Amalekites—Nature of their crime—Connection of their punishment with the general scheme of the Jewish dispensation—General answer to all objections of this kind—This dispensation did not encourage a spirit of general persecution or conquest—Care taken it should not harden the hearts of the Jews—General laws of war among the Jews merciful—Great care to encourage a spirit of humanity—Conclusion.*

DEUTERONOMY, XX. 16, 18.

"Of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt "save nothing alive that breatheth: that they teach you not to do after their abominations, which "they have done unto their gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your God."

IN reviewing the effects of Judaism, our attention is, in the first instance, necessarily directed to the consequences attending

the first settlement of the nation in the country assigned them by God for their inheritance: a subject of the utmost importance, because this command to exercise such extreme severity against the nations of Canaan, whose land the Jews were to possess, has been always considered as the strongest objection to the divine original of the Mosaic Law; and therefore demands a candid and full discussion. For this purpose it seems necessary to inquire, whether this transaction can be reconciled with just ideas of the attributes and providence of God, *so far as it affected the Canaanites;* or in other words, whether the severe punishment inflicted on these nations, was justified by their crimes; and whether it is credible, that their destruction and the settlement of the Jews in their room, should form a part of the divine economy. The *next* question that arises seems to be, whether the *mode* in which this punishment was inflicted, and this settlement of the chosen people of God secured, is reconcileable with just ideas of divine wisdom and mercy, *so far as it regards the Jews;* or, in other words, whether it is credible God should directly command the extirpation of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than effect it by any other means. These two inquiries seem to include every question which can arise on this important subject.

Let us then first examine, how far the severe punishment *

* Before my reader proceeds in this inquiry, it is expedient to remark, that considerable doubt exists as to the real purport and meaning of the commands delivered by the Jewish Lawgiver on this subject, and the true extent of the severity ordered to be exercised against the Canaanites. The whole passage runs thus: † "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be that all the people that is found therein, shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God shall give thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of those nations. But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee: that they teach you not to do after their abominations, which they have done unto their gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your God." On this passage there are two opinions: one, that the injunction, "When thou comest nigh unto a city, to fight

† Deut. xx. from 10 to 18.

inflicted on the nations of Canaan was justified by their crimes; and whether it is credible, that the settlement of the Jews in their room, should form a part of the divine economy.

What then were the crimes, which, it is asserted in the

against it, then proclaim peace unto it," extends only to the cities of the nations afar off, but does not apply to the cities of the seven nations; who, according to the opinion of these commentators, were to be utterly destroyed without any offer of peace. The other, that this injunction applies to every city alike, which the Israelites approached against, even of the seven nations; and that the difference of treatment was not to take place until after this proffer of peace was rejected, and the city in consequence subdued; when, if it were a remote city, they were permitted only to put to death those who bore arms against them, who, at that period, were all the adult males; but that if it were a city of the seven nations, all its inhabitants should be utterly destroyed; lest, if permitted to remain, they should infect the chosen people of God with the contagion of that obstinate idolatry, to renounce which was always one of the conditions of that peace which they had presumptuously rejected. On this last supposition, the Israelites were to offer peace to the Canaanites and spare their lives, on condition of their emigrating for ever from their country, or renouncing idolatry, adopting the principles of the patriarchal religion, contained in the precepts of Noah, resigning their territory, dissolving their national union, and submitting to become slaves. For it is evident that they could not tolerate idolatry, nor enter into any equal leagues which the idols, who were worshipped as the guardian gods of the adverse party, must be supposed to witness and sanction; nor leave in the possession of their cities and lands those nations, whose country the great Jehovah had assigned to them as their peculiar inheritance, to be entirely divided among their several tribes. But that if the nations of Canaan had renounced idolatry, and submitted to slavery or emigration, they might have been saved from extermination, is strongly confirmed by that passage of the sacred history, which, after relating the war carried on by Joshua against the confederated kings of these nations, and stating that "all the cities of those kings, and the kings of them, did Joshua take, and "smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed them, as "Moses, the servant of the Lord commanded;" adds this remarkable observation; * "Joshua made war a long time with all these kings: there was "NOT A CITY THAT MADE PEACE WITH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, save the "Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it "was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they might come against "Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might "have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded "Moses." This passage evidently implies, that it was in the power of these nations, by accepting peace, to escape extermination; but that they were permitted to harden their hearts against all the wonders of divine Providence, in behalf of the Jews, and by this obstinacy exposed to suffer the full weight of that punishment which their crimes deserved, and which God had denounced against them. All who are conversant in the language of the Old Testament know, that it speaks of every event which God permits, as proceeding directly from him; and describes him as hardening the hearts of those who abuse the divine dispensations, to harden their own hearts in guilt; though these dispensations display a plain natural tendency to soften and reform them.

If this interpretation of the various commands, relating to the conduct

* Joshua, xi. 18, 20.

Mosaic history, drew down upon the nations of Canaan that punishment which the Jews were commanded, nay, compelled by God to execute? In the first place, a total apostasy from the worship of the true God; substituting in his room the sum

of the Israelites towards the nations of Canaan, be admitted, the true state of the question will be, whether it appears consistent with the divine attributes to dispossess of their country a nation sunk in idolatry and vice, in order to place in it another people, selected to preserve a knowledge of the true God, and the principles of moral virtue? And if the guilty nation refused to renounce idolatry, or to submit to the settlement of this chosen people, whether it was inconsistent with the divine mercy to authorize the infliction of the severest punishment, even to extermination?

If, on the other side, we adopt the rigorous interpretation of the passage before us, and suppose the total extermination of the nations of Canaan commanded, without offering them any previous choice of renouncing idolatry, and submitting to the settlement of the Jews, it will remain to inquire, Whether we can reconcile with the divine attributes, this infliction of the severest punishment, in consequence of the long continued and incorrigible impiety and profligacy of this idolatrous race, without affording them at that time any farther probation, any immediate offer of pardon and mercy? I am indeed myself persuaded, that this was not the real state of the case. But the commentators who maintain a contrary opinion are so numerous, that I should not think it right to rest the defence of the Jewish Law on the former interpretation, which I adopt, though this is supported by still stronger authorities.

The chief objection to this interpretation appears to arise from the Gibeonites having judged it necessary, in order to obtain mercy to pretend that they came from a far country; which seems to imply, that had they been known to have formed part of the seven nations, they could not have obtained it. But to this it is answered by Maimonides, that the Gibeonites had in common with the other Canaanites refused the first offers of peace, and were therefore exposed to the same fate with them; but that afterwards, terrified by the miraculous destruction of Jericho, and the fate of Ai, they determined to sue for mercy, and had recourse to the artifice related, lest their former rejection of peace should be objected to them. Vide Maimonides, Halack Melakim, cap. vi.; also Cumæus de Republica Hebræorum, Lib. II. cap. xx. Another reason why the Gibeonites had recourse to this artifice appears to have been, that they might form an *equal* league with the Jews, which was not permitted to any of the seven nations. This is the opinion of Masius, vide Poli Synopsis in locum. The error of the princes of the Jews, in granting the requests of the Gibeonites, appears to have been, in not consulting the oracle, and thus being led to form an equal league with this part of the seven nations, without insisting on the possession of their territory; but the Gibeonites had certainly * acknowledged the authority of Jehovah, and therefore must have renounced idolatry. Vide, in confirmation of this, Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. II. cap. xiii. sect. iv.

In confirmation of the milder interpretation which I prefer, Selden de Jure Naturali Juxta Hebræos, Lib. VI. cap. xii. Vol. I. p. 665, remarks, that in the old commentaries of the Jews it is related, that Joshua, before he invaded any of the seven nations, accompanied his declaration of war with a threefold proclamation, which he quotes from the rabbi Samuel Ben Nachman, who says, "Joshua sent three letters to the land of the Canaanites, "before the Israelites invaded it, or rather proposed three things: Let those

* Joshua ix. 9.

and moon, and host of heaven, as well as the fire and air, and the other elements of nature, in process of time deifying their ancestors; and finally, worshiping stocks and stones, and creeping things, idols the most absurd and abominable. But their

" who choose to fly, fly; let those who choose peace, enter into treaty; let " those who choose war, take up arms. In consequence of this, the Gir- " gashites, believing the power of God, fled away, retreating into Africa: " the Gibeonites entered into a league, and thus continued inhabitants of the " land of Israel: the one-and-thirty kings made war and fell." Selden remarks, " That what is here related of the flight into Africa, wonderfully " agrees with the history in the Talmud, according to which, the Africans " applied to Alexander the Great, and laid claim to this part of the land of " Israel, as their paternal territory, on this very pretence; and also agrees " with that ancient inscription in Mauritania Tingitana, preserved by Pro- " copius, which declares, that the ancient inhabitants had fled thither from " the face of Joshua the son of Nun. But this emigration of the Girgashites " may not have been universal, as their name occurs in the list of the " nations who fought against Israel, Joshua xxiv. 11." Yet as it occurs only this once, while the other six nations are constantly enumerated as carrying on the war, this mention of them seems a recapitulation of the nations whose land God delivered into the hand of the Jews, according to his promise, Deuteronomy vii. 1, and Joshua iii. 10, rather than a positive assertion of their having been perseveringly engaged in the war. If they fled at its very commencement, this accounts for their being mentioned exactly as they are, before the invasion under Joshua began, in the divine promise that the seven nations should be cast out, and in this recapitulation, but no where in the distinct history of the war; a *coincidence* which strongly confirms the tradition of their flight, and of the cause to which it is imputed, the warning given them by the proclamation of Joshua mentioned above. If the reader wishes to see the arguments for the milder interpretation stated more at large, he will find them in Maimonides, Cunæus, Selden, and Poli Synopsis, as quoted in this note; the Universal History, Vol. I. p. 531, note p; Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. II. cap. xii. sect. ii. & iii.; Bibliotheca Biblica on Deut. xx. 10, 15 & 16; Patrick on the same texts, and on Joshua xi. 18; also Calmet on the same texts, who states fully the reasons for both interpretations, but appears to lean to the rigorous one, as does Leydeker de Republica Hebræorum, p. 257 & 259: Le Clerc also, in his notes on Deut. xx. 10. &c. adopts the more rigorous interpretation: yet in a note on Joshua xi. 18, he admits, " That if any city of " the seven nations had wished for peace, they might have had it, according " to Deut. xx." Dr. Gill agrees with Le Clerc. Vide also Dodd's Commentary on the above passages, particularly his Reflections on the destruction of the seven Nations of Canaan, annexed to the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy, with a citation from which I will conclude this already too long note: " Since therefore, as has been remarked, neither David with all " his power, nor Solomon, did destroy this people, since they subsisted " in the country from the days of Moses, for upwards of four hundred and " fourscore years; since they were so far subdued as to become tributaries of " service as well as of money; and since they might therefore have been ab- " solutely destroyed, because conquered, and yet were kept alive; it seems " to follow, that these people were not to be absolutely cut off, men, women " and children, without mercy, but only were to be destroyed as nations; " and that if any submitted and became subject to the Jews, and relinquished " their idolatry, they were not to be deprived of life. For did none of the

apostasy and idolatry was not, as some affect to consider it, a *mere *error of judgment*, which called rather for instruction to enlighten than punishment to correct it: No, it was connected with every vice that can degrade human nature and pollute society; the crimes which it produced are briefly but forcibly pointed out to the abhorrence of the Jews by their divine Lawgiver, as plain and notorious facts. † "Inquire not thou after "the gods of these nations, saying, How did these nations serve "their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so "unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord "which he hateth have they done unto their gods: for even "their sons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire to "their gods." And as their idolatry thus led them to the most ferocious and unnatural cruelty which could outrage humanity, so it encouraged and sanctioned the basest pollutions. The Jewish Legislator enumerates in the black catalogue, the crime against nature, bestiality, incest, adultery, in a word, every crime of this kind which can disgrace and degrade human nature; and adds, "Defile not yourselves in any of those things; for in "all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. "And the land is defiled; therefore I do visit the iniquity "thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabi-"tants. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye com-"mit not any of those abominable customs which were committed "before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am "the Lord your God." ‡ The means by which the Midianitish women, at the instigation of a wicked king and a false prophet, § seduced the Jews first to indulge in impurity, and then to

"Jews in all this time understand the command? Did none of their gene-"rals or successful warriors understand that their business was to destroy all "these people? Had they no opportunity, not even when they made them "tributaries; and were Joshua, Samuel and David, such strangers to the "Law?" Vide also Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. 1. cap. ii. sect. ii. and Lib. III. cap. xiii. sect iv.

* Thus Bayle represents it; vide Warburton's Divine Legation, p. 159.; and Tyndal and Bolingbroke frequently. And the intolerant spirit of the Jewish religion is the perpetual object of Voltaire's declamatory and virulent abuse; at the same time, with his usual inconsistency, he labours as vainly to prove it tolerated idolatry. Vide Jew's Letters to him, Vol. I. p. 267, compared with 287.

† Deut. xii. 30, 31.

‡ Lev. xviii. 24, 25. 30.

§ Vide Numbers xxv. compared with xxxi. particularly ver. 16.

apostatize to idolatry; the * influence of his foreign wives on Solomon, and of † Jezebel on Ahab, afford striking proofs of the necessity of rooting this depraved and impious race from the land in which the Jews were to settle, as a preparation necessary to preserve the chosen people of God from the contagion of their crimes and their idolatry; and explain the necessity of the command so solemnly proclaimed by the Jewish Legislator, so far as it respects the Canaanites:‡ "When the "Lord thy God shall deliver these nations before thee, saith "the Lord, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; "thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy "unto them; neither shalt thou make marriages with them, for "they will turn away thy sons from following me, that they "may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled "against thee, and destroy thee suddenly."

Such were the idolatry, and such the crimes of the Canaanites, which no examples of previous judgments had been able to correct. The terror of the Deluge had been long forgotten; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the very midst of the land of Canaan, had been disregarded; the instruction and example of Abraham and the patriarchs had produced no effect. These crimes and apostasies grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength, till at the time of the invasion of the Jews§ "their iniquities were full," and their obstinacy incorrigible. In vain did they hear of the divine terrors exhibited in the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, the miraculous passage over Jordan, and the overthrow of Jericho. A single nation (the Gibeonites) submitted to renounce idolatry, and court the protection of the Jews. Far from feeling any disposition to imitate their example, this submission roused the rage, and accelerated the confederacy, of the remaining Canaanites against the Jews: "For the king "of Jerusalem sent unto all the surrounding kings, saying, "Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon; "for it hath made peace with Joshua, and with the Children of "Israel."‖

The idolatry, the depravity, and the incorrigibleness of the

* Vide 1 Kings xi. † 1 Kings xvi. 31.
‡ Deut. vii. § Compare Genesis xv. 16, with Lev. xviii. 25.
‖ Joshua x. 3, and 4.

nations of Canaan, being such as we have now seen, can we make it a question, whether the moral Governor of the universe acted consistently with his justice and mercy, in exterminating this people, and planting in their stead a nation, in which the worship of the one supreme God and the principles of moral virtue were to be preserved, and from whence the light of true religion, and the mercies of the Christian scheme, were in due time to be diffused over the whole civilized world.

If the Deist objects to the believer in revelation, because he conceives it inconsistent with the divine attributes, that such should be the declared scheme and manifest interposition of Providence in the Scriptures; on the very same ground may the Atheist object, that in the natural course of things, which the Deist contends is regulated by the secret providence of God, whole nations are frequently cut off, and succeeded by those who have destroyed them; and that to suffer such destruction to take place, or allow the conqueror to reap any advantage from it, disproves the justice and mercy of the supposed Ruler of the universe; or rather proves, that no such Ruler exists, but that blind chance, or mere human agency, determines the fates of nations and the course of events. Undoubtedly the Deist will truly reply, that we generally perceive impiety and depravity prepare the way for the destruction of states; and that, though the conquerors sometimes appear little superior in religion or morals to the conquered, yet in the progress of time, we frequently discern* moral good arising from this troubled scene; and, that the various revolutions of nations have contributed in what seems to have been the most effectual method to advance the progress of civilization, morality and religion, and forward the gradual improvement of the human race: while any ap-

* My readers will probably be as much gratified as I have been, at seeing the principle here stated, advanced in the most attractive form, and adorned with all the charms of numbers, by the late Rev. J. D. Carlyle, in his beautiful poem written on the banks of the Bosphorus; a scene, as he observes, celebrated "for transactions which embrace the most interesting "parts of human history," and from which the author satisfactorily illustrates the moral deduction here maintained; teaching men to

"Hail that Power, whose gracious will
Wakes the tempest, pours the flood;
Taught by Him, each germ of ill
Blossoms in expansive good."

parent inequality or severity with respect to individuals, can supply no shadow of objection to the justice and mercy of the Divinity, if we take into account, that all inequality will be perfectly rectified in a future life, for which the present is only a preparatory scene of discipline and trial. Exactly on the same principles does the advocate for revelation answer the Deist, who objects to the extermination of the Canaanites and the seizure of their country by the Jews, under an express divine command; that in this event Divine Providence acted in a manner strictly analogous to the general course of that moral government, constantly exercised in the world; with this only difference, that the same measures of divine administration, which in other cases are carried into effect by the secret influence, and, as it were, tacit permission of the Supreme moral Governor, were here executed by his avowed interposition and immediate authority. If, then, the general system of events is not inconsistent with the belief of a superintending Providence, neither is this particular fact. If the divine Governor constantly chastises public depravity by public punishment; and when nations become so impious and immoral, that their further existence is subversive of human virtue and human happiness, destroys them by the hand of some other nation, which is better adapted to forward and assist the views of the Divinity in the melioration of mankind; it is perfectly credible that the same divine Governor should directly assist the extermination of the most signally and incorrigibly-impious and depraved nation that perhaps ever existed; in order to promote, in the most decisive manner, the purposes of the divine economy, by planting in their country a chosen people, evidently protected and controlled by Divine Providence, expressly appointed to be the depositaries and preservers of true religion and moral virtue, and by whose instrumentality all the nations of the earth have been blessed: blessed by the establishment of the Christian scheme, which, through this chosen nation, was communicated to mankind.

It is necessary thus to take into our consideration the whole purpose and progress of the divine economy, when we would account for and defend the particular part of it we are now considering (the extermination of the Canaanites, and the seizure of their country by the Jews;) because this is undoubtedly one

chief reason of the departure from the usual tenour of the divine Government, in directly assisting and authorizing what, in other cases, it only silently permits and secretly controls. The nature of the Gospel scheme required, and its importance justified, a continued and avowed interposition of divine power, to prepare for and introduce it. The establishment of the Jewish nation in this country, and at this period, was undoubtedly an important and essential step of this necessary preparation; and thence it was, that it was effected by the direct assistance and express command of God. This is not taking for granted the divine original of the Gospel in order to defend Judaism; but requiring that the whole scheme of revelation shall be considered together, and not in separate parts, and each part condemned; because, if thus separately viewed, as unconnected with any preceding dispensations, and unnecessary to any subsequent good effects, it would be strange and unaccountable; whereas it is by this connection explained and justified.

But this command, it is said, confounds the innocent with the guilty! "What! command to leave nothing alive that breatheth. "Destroy all the smiling infants, all the innocent babes!" * No, surely: it is impossible that God should permit, much less command, the innocent thus to suffer. Let us weigh this objection so far as it relates to the sufferers: (how far such a command can be justified as it regards the Jews, we shall consider hereafter.) Now, that God may permit the innocent thus to suffer, is certainly credible, because He constantly does permit it, as well in the regular course of human affairs, as in the progress of those signal and awful judgments, which we do not hesitate to ascribe to a more marked and direct interference of Divine Providence. Guilty parents frequently entail diseases and poverty on their infant children; the felon and the murderer, who forfeit their lives to public justice, sometimes leave their infant progeny exposed to the severest sufferings: and, to take a more extensive view, when the famine and the pestilence, those dreadful ministers of the divine chastisement, desolate a guilty land, do they spare the smiling infant and the innocent babe? When the deluge, the conflagration, or the earthquake, reduce to

* This is the language of Paine.

ruins some flourishing city, do not infancy and innocence sink equally with guilt and age into the common grave? Can this be considered as an imputation on divine justice and mercy, except we forget that this premature, and, to our view, deplorable fate, is really nothing more than a transitory shock, which attends the escape of those innocent ones into another and a better world, where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes, and they shall repose for ever in the bosom of their Father and their God? In a word, admit a future life, and all such difficulties vanish at once: deny it, and the entire scheme, not only of revelation, but of nature itself, is an inexplicable enigma. Assuredly then, as to the sufferings of those innocents, whom we may suppose to have perished at the destruction of the Canaanites, we may admit them credible, because they are analogous to the whole course of nature and the tenour of Providence; and we may rest assured, the same divine Power which commanded their infliction, has abundantly repaid them by an eternal recompense. They form therefore no impeachment on the justice or mercy of God.

Thus we have considered how far this part of the divine economy can be vindicated, as it regards the Canaanites themselves; and I trust it has appeared, that the idolatry, pollutions and cruelty, of these nations, were so abominable, and at the same time so incorrigible, as to justify the moral Governor of the universe in inflicting on them the most signal and severe punishments, even to extermination, without affording any longer period of trial, or any immediate offer of pardon and mercy: though there is a strong probability, that, previous to this infliction of final vengeance, an opportunity was given them of accepting the peace offered by the Israelites, on condition of renouncing idolatry, and yielding their country to the chosen people of God, to whom the Governor of the world had assigned this promised land, by a grant as clear as the divine authority from which it proceeded was supreme: a grant confirmed by the most signal miracles, which were certainly known to the inhabitants of Canaan, who were thus forewarned of the divine authority on which their submission was required, and the punishment which would await their resistance.

That this national punishment, provoked by national guilt,

should involve innocent individuals, even smiling babes and infant children, is perfectly analogous to the general course of Providence, and forms no objection to the justice or mercy of that God, who will assuredly take care to rectify all inequality of this life, at that final manifestation of His majesty, when He shall take to himself all power and reign, by rendering to every one according to their works.

LECTURE I.

SECT. II.—*It is not incredible that God should have chosen to exterminate the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than by any other means, and that He should have commanded the Jews to inflict such extermination.*

DEUTERONOMY, vii. 2, 4.

"When the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy "them—for they will turn away thy sons from following me,that they may serve other gods: so will "the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."

I now proceed to discuss that which, I am well aware, is the most plausible part of the objection to this part of the Jewish scheme. It will still be maintained, that though the expulsion, or even the destruction of the Canaanites, may have been merited and necessary, yet it is incredible God should command their extirpation by the sword of the Jews; for this would be to sanction plunder and ferociousness, national violence and personal cruelty by a divine authority. But is it not evident, the advancers of this objection forget, that a clear divine interposition plainly requiring a particular act of obedience to an immediate divine command, so materially affects the principle on which that action is performed, the motives from which it proceeds, and the effects it produces on the minds of those who are thus employed by the Divinity,* that it may altogether

* This is expressed, with his usual acuteness and closeness of reasoning, by Bishop Butler, in his Analogy, Part II. ch. iii. on the *credibility that a Revelation should appear liable to objections.* After clearly establishing this general conclusion, by proving, p. 250 and 251, "We are incompetent "judges even of the constitution of nature, which is very different from "what, before experience, would have been expected; and such as, men "fancy, there lie great objections against; which renders it beforehand "highly credible, that they may find the revealed dispensation likewise, if "they judge of it as they do of the constitution of nature, very different "from expectations formed beforehand; and liable, in appearance, to great "objections. And thus, as we fall into infinite follies and mistakes, when-"ever we pretend, otherwise than from experience and analogy, to judge of "the constitution and course of nature; it is evidently supposable before-

change the moral character of the action itself. A distinction similar to this, is admitted uniformly in common life. If an individual, hurried on by ferocious resentment, and unsanctioned by public authority, avenges the wrong he has sustained, by inflicting death upon his enemy, we stigmatize him as a murderer; but if a criminal is convicted of atrocious guilt, condemned by the solemn decision of the Law, and the execution of the sentence committed to the minister of public justice, the

"hand, that we should fall into as great, in pretending to judge, in the like "manner, concerning Revelation. Nor is there any more ground to expect "that this latter should appear to us clear of objections, than that the former should." After illustrating this principle by a variety of instances most striking and conclusive, he applies it to that part of the revealed scheme now before us, p. 266: "And now, what is the just consequence "from all these things? Not that reason is no judge of what is offered to "us, as being of divine revelation. For, this would be to infer that we are "unable to judge of any thing, because we are unable to judge of all things. "Reason can, and it ought to judge, not only of the meaning, but also of "the morality and the evidence of revelation. *First*, It is the province of "reason to judge of the morality of the Scriptures; *i. e.* not whether it contains things different from what *we should have expected* from a wise, just, "and good Being; for objections from hence have been now obviated: but "whether it contains things *plainly contradictory* to wisdom, justice, or "goodness; to what the light of nature teaches us of God. And I know "nothing of this sort objected against Scripture, excepting such objections "as are formed upon suppositions, which would *equally conclude, that the "constitution of nature is contradictory to wisdom, justice, or goodness;* "which most certainly it is not. Indeed there are some particular precepts "in Scripture, given to particular persons, requiring actions, which would "be immoral and vicious, were it not for such precepts. But it is easy to "see, that all these of such a kind, as that the precept changes the whole "nature of the case, and of the action; and both constitutes, and shows, "that not to be unjust or immoral, which, prior to the precept, must have "appeared, and really have been so; which may well be, since none of "these precepts are contrary to immutable morality. If it were commanded, "to cultivate *the principles, and act from the spirit of treachery, ingratitude, cruelty;* the command would not alter the nature of the case or of "the action, in any of these instances. But it is quite otherwise in precepts "which require only the doing of an external action: for instance, taking "away the property or life of any. For men have no right to either life "or property, but what arises solely from the grant of God: when this grant "is revoked, they cease to have any right at all, in either: and when this "revocation is made known, as surely it is possible it may be, it must cease "to be unjust to deprive them of either. And though a course of external "acts, which without command would be immoral, must make an immoral "habit: yet a few detached commands have no such natural tendency.

"I thought proper to say thus much of the few Scripture precepts, which "require, not vicious actions, but actions which would have been vicious, "had it not been for such precepts; because they are sometimes weakly "urged as immoral, and great weight is laid upon the objections drawn "from them. But to me there seems no difficulty at all in these precepts, "but what arises from their *being offences:* i. e. from their being liable to "be perverted, as indeed they are, by wicked designing men, to serve the

infliction of death in this case is a duty, not a crime. Now what we contend for is, that with regard to the Canaanites, the Jews stood exactly in the relation of ministers of justice, plainly commanded, nay irresistibly impelled by the Supreme Ruler of the world, to execute upon that nation His solemn sentence of confiscation and death. They obeyed this command of necessity, driven by the terror of immediate and severe punishment from God, if in the smallest item they relaxed the rigour of the

" most horrid purposes; and, perhaps, to mislead the weak and enthusiastic. " And objections from this head are not objections against Revelation; but " against the whole notion of religion, as a trial; and against the general " constitution of nature." On this subject of a state of trial, vide Butler, Part I. chap. ch. iv and v.

Equally important is the observation of the celebrated Cumberland on this subject, in the twenty-fourth section of the Prolegomena to his profound and comprehensive work on the Law of Nature, p. 29 and 30; in which, after having previously reduced all the precepts of that Law to one general principle, even the " steady pursuit of the " common good of the whole " system of rational beings, as far as it is in our power," he observes among the various advantages arising from this simplification, that it enables us to deduce that subordination amongst the various particular laws of nature, according to which, that of prior obligation frequently limits the application of an inferior precept; he proceeds, " Ex hoc ordine inter leges naturæ, quo " speciales omnes generali subordinantur, et illarum posteriores prioribus, " commodissime ostendi posse videtur, de illarum nulla unquam a Deo dis- " pensatum esse; sed in iis casibus, in quibus posterioris obligatio tolli vi- " deatur, materiam ita mutari ut priori tantum legi observandæ locus sit. " Sic patet non dispensari de lege dominiorum divisionem stabiliente, et " alieni invasionem prohibente; si Deus licitam faciat Israelitis, Cananæorum " in ipsum deliquentium terram invadere. Quippe eadem illa lex decernit, " necesse esse ad bonum commune, ut Deo imprimis tribuatur dominium " illud eminens in omnes et omnia, cujus vi ipse, quoties ad summum finem " conducere videbitur, auferre potest dominium cujusvis creaturæ in suam " vitam ac bona, et illud in alteram transferre per idonea voluntatis suæ signa: " quod in casu proposito factum fuisse legimus; unde Israelitæ sua sibi vin- " dicabant, non aliena invadendi potestatem accipiebant. Pariter etiam " non dispensatur de lege quæ propter bonum commune vetat innocentibus " nocere, si quando jubeatur innocens, (cum ad hunc finem necessarium est) " periculum noxæ, ipsamve mortem subire; Deo præsertim voluntatem suam " hac in re satis aperte indicante. Hinc enim et Deo omnium regi suus de- " fertur honos, et aptissime (quia secundum ipsius judicium) summo fini " consulitur." Vide also Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, as quoted in the last note. But Grotius, Cumberland and Butler, appear shallow reasoners to such writers as Messrs. Tyndall and Morgan, Chubb and Bolingbroke, Voltaire and Paine, and narrow-minded bigots to Dr. Geddes, who, to the assertion that God could dispense with any moral law, by giving authority in a special instance, to take away the life or property of any human being, declares, " I might obstinately deny this assertion, and maintain that he " could not without being unjust; nor do I see what solid argument could " be adduced to prove the contrary." Vide Critical Remarks, p. 423. It is to be hoped few will be found to imitate this obstinacy of the Doctor: to affirm that God cannot without injustice authorize the infliction of punishment on guilt, is a discovery in natural religion so *novel*, it ought to be maintained with *diffidence* not *obstinacy*.

sentence. On their first approach to the land of Canaan, their inspired Lawgiver had commanded them immediately to attack it: but the people distrusting the divine power, proposed to send spies to view the land; who reported that the people "were "great and tall, and the cities walled up to heaven."* This completely terrified the unwarlike Jews: they were seized with the most unmanly, and, in their situation, impious panic.† At this moment of mad rebellion, from infidelity and cowardice combined, the glory of the Lord appeared. "As I live, saith the "Lord, all this evil congregation that are gathered together "against me, in this wilderness, they shall be consumed, and "there they shall die." And to confirm this menace, the ten spies, who had brought this evil report upon the land, died instantly by a plague before the Lord; but Joshua and Caleb lived still. Astonished at the appearance of the divine glory, appalled by the instant punishment of the spies who had misled them, shocked at the idea of wandering forty years in the wilderness, and there perishing, they mourned greatly, and said, "we have sinned against the Lord; we will go up and "fight as the Lord commanded us. But the Lord would not "be entreated. Moses said, Go not up, for the Lord is not "among you, and ye shall fall by the sword." Again obstinate and rebellious, they went up presumptuously; but Moses and the Ark of God departed not out of the camp; and the Canaanites smote them and discomfited them. Convinced by such decided experience of their total dependance on the God of Hosts, they submitted to his power: forty years they continued to wander in the wilderness, without making another effort, either to return into Egypt or to invade Canaan. And now, when of all that generation who had distrusted the Divine Power not one survived, save the pious and intrepid Joshua and Caleb, "For the hand of the Lord was against them to consume them," the host of Israel is again commanded to go up and take possession of the promised land, under the express condition of their consuming all the people which the Lord their God should deliver them. ‡ "The Lord thy God, says the Lawgiver, "shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them

* Compare Numb. xiii. and xiv. with Deut i. from ver. 19.

† Vide Part I. Lect. v.

‡ Deut. vii. 23, 25.

" with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. And he " shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt des- " troy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able " to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them. The " graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt " not desire the silver nor the gold that is on them, nor take it " unto thee for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God." On these conditions, and under this command, they approach the river Jordan; it is miraculously divided to make way before them; they encamp before Jericho, which is pronounced accursed,* or rather devoted to the Lord: " Even it, and all that " are therein. And keep ye," says their inspired Judge, " from " the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves a curse when ye " take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of the Lord a " curse, and trouble it. Only the silver and gold, and vessels " of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord; they shall " come into the treasury of the Lord." Thus was Jericho placed under a solemn anathema; its walls, otherwise impregnable, are miraculously and in a moment levelled to the ground, so that the people " went up into the city, every man straight " before him, and they took the city."

Now, I ask, are we to consider their conduct in such circumstances as the result of their own natural unbiassed choice, or as the conduct of men feeling themselves under the direct control of Omnipotence? Are we to impute it to a spirit of cruelty, that in this instance they utterly destroyed all that was in the city with the edge of the sword, according to the divine command? Or was it a spirit of plunder that instigated them to destroy not only the inhabitants but the spoil, the sheep and oxen: in a word, to burn the city and all that was therein? Only the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, they brought into the house of the Lord. Assuredly they were impelled neither by cruelty nor by avarice; they acted not from the common feelings, or in the usual manner, of human conquerors; they felt themselves bound to obey the Lord God of Hosts, whose sentence they executed, and by whose power they conquered.

Let us now mark the sequel. A single individual † trans-

* Joshua vi. 17, 19.

† Joshua vii. 18.

gressed the divine command, by obedience to which only they could hope for success. The divine support was therefore withdrawn; and though the next enemies whom they encountered, were apparently so inconsiderable that they despised them, yet "they "fled before the men of Ai: and the hearts of all the people "melted like water." Even Joshua was heart-struck with terror, "and rent his clothes, and fell upon his face before the Lord, "he and all the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. "And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou "brought this people at all over Jordan, to deliver us into the "hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? For the Canaanites, "and all the inhabitants of the land, shall hear of us, and shall "environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth. And "the Lord said, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon "thy face? Israel hath sinned, and hath transgressed my "covenant which I commanded them: they have even taken the "accursed thing, and have also stolen, and have put it amongst "their own stuff. Therefore the Children of Israel could not "stand before their enemies, because they were accursed. "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the "accursed thing from among you. Up, sanctify the people: "and on the morrow the Lord will by lot take first the tribe, "next the family, and lastly the man who hath taken the "accursed thing: and he shall be burnt with fire, and all that "he hath, because he hath taken the accursed thing." The solemn inquisition is made; the lot is cast; the criminal is found; he confesses that he had taken part of the spoil of Jericho, even gold and silver and raiment, and that they were hid in his tent: they are found; the congregation stone the criminal, and burn him with fire. Now the Lord is reconciled; victory again crowns the host of Jehovah, the elements of heaven war for Israel; and in a great battle more of their opponents fall by hailstones of supernatural magnitude than by the sword.

After all these proofs of a divine interference, could the Jews avoid being fully convinced that their God, the omnipresent and all-powerful Lord of heaven and earth, had commanded the extermination of the Canaanites; or could they venture to dispute the command? Let us then reflect on the feelings which must have influenced them while acting under this command, the natural effects it may have produced on their moral

character and conduct, and the probable reasons why such a mode of executing the divine judgments formed a part of the Jewish dispensation.

In the first place, is it not evident that the Jews, considering themselves as nothing more than instruments in the hands of Jehovah, to execute his sentence on the condemned nations of Canaan, were not actuated by any of those depraved motives which almost universally attend the prosecution of war? The whole series of events which occurred while they were thus obeying the plain mandate, or rather yielding to the resistless impulse of Omnipotence, was a continued trial of their humble reliance on the divine protection, their confidence in the divine promises, and their submission to the divine will: to which they were to sacrifice every personal indulgence, and subjugate every passion of their soul. The thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, are too frequently the most powerful stimulus to war and conquest, with the bulk of every soldiery: but with the Jews, these motives were on this occasion wholly set aside. The entire spoil however rich, the captives however numerous or desirable, were wholly devoted to the Lord, condemned to destruction with the city or people to whom they belonged. Avarice and licentiousness therefore were checked, not cherished, by this system in the Jewish people: they acted not from their own choice, they indulged not their own desires, they merely obeyed the immediate direction of Almighty Power, not daring either to destroy or to show mercy, to consume or to spare, any thing animate or inanimate, but according to the strict letter of the divine instructions.

Further, as all avaricious and licentious propensities were upon this occasion checked and disappointed, so it is scarcely to be conceived that, circumstanced as the Jews were, sanguinary passions could find access to their minds, or be cherished and encouraged from the part they were compelled to act. The greatest care was taken to mark out the crime of idolatry in general, not the peculiar individuals with whom they were then at war, as the object of abhorrence. Every thing connected with such false worship, animate and inanimate, was stigmatized as an abomination to the Lord: the image, the altar, the grove around it, the silver, the gold, the houses which were the property of idolaters, as well as the idolaters them-

selves, were to be utterly destroyed. And in order that the feelings of detestation and abhorrence might be inseparably associated with the crime of idolatry, not with the persons of the Canaanites; in order to prove to the Jews that they were commanded to exterminate the seven nations, not from any principle of personal resentment or national hostility, but merely as criminals condemned by God; they were solemnly bound to exercise exactly the same severity towards any of their own nation,* who should apostatize to idolatry. The IDOLATROUS HEBREW CITY, OR HEBREW TRIBE WAS TO BE TOTALLY EXTERMINATED, AS WELL AS THE NATIONS OF CANAAN. If the most beloved brother, or the chosen friend of the Jew, the wife of his bosom, or the child of his hopes, should worship false gods, it was commanded that he should pursue this dearest object of his affection even unto death: "His eye was not to spare, neither was he to show pity unto him."

Acting under such a system, it seems probable that ferocious passion, personal resentment, and even national hostility, could not prevail in the Jewish host, with the same force as in any other conquering army; and if there is in human nature any tendency to pity the sufferings of criminals, where the crime hurts not ourselves, it was probably felt on this occasion by the Jews. Indeed we have decisive proof, that it was with reluctance, and almost by compulsion, that the Jews executed the sentence of divine justice on the condemned nations; because it is certain, that as soon as the terror of immediate punishment on themselves was in any degree withdrawn, they neglected to execute the divine command, they spared the remaining Canaanites, they indulged their own indolence by reposing in peace, or their pride and avarice, by reducing their enemies to slaves or tributaries; and in process of time began to regard them with affection, to court their alliance, to imitate their manners, and finally, participate in their idolatry and their licentiousness.

If then the severities which at first they were compelled to exercise against these idolaters had a tendency to excite in the minds of both parties, sentiments of alienation and hostility towards each other; let it be remembered, that this tendency was useful and necessary; and that these severities, far from being continued longer, or carried farther, than was essentially re-

* Vide Deut. xiii. and Vol. I. Part II. Lect. III. at the beginning.

quisite for the purposes of the divine economy, would at first seem not to have been carried far enough. If the Jews could not be entirely prevented from mixing with the Canaanites, even by the mutual hostility which such measures as they were commanded and compelled to employ, appear calculated to produce, how instant, and total, and inseparable, would have been the union of those nations, had any milder measures been employed; and how entirely would the scheme of setting apart a chosen and peculiar people, to preserve the worship and the oracles of God, have been defeated. How impracticable would it have been to mark out one peculiar nation, tribe or family, from whom the Messiah might be proved to descend, by whom the word of prophecy might be preserved, and its accomplishment attested. In a word, suppose this part of the Jewish dispensation changed; and it appears probable, as far as human sagacity can determine, that the whole scheme must have been abandoned, or effected by means to us inconceivable. When, therefore, we ask, Why the sword of the Jews was employed for the punishment of the condemned nations of Canaan, rather than any other means? we answer,* that no other mode of punishment could have so effectually guarded the Jews from being seduced by the allurements of idolatry, and involved in all the guilt and profanation, all the multiplied cruelties and impurities, which idolatry necessarily introduced. The degree of alienation and hostility thus excited in both parties accomplished this purpose of the divine administration as far as was indispensably necessary, with less extensive infliction of miraculous punishment than any other conceivable mode. All the nations of Canaan might have been swept off by a pestilence, and the Jews placed, without resistance, in the possession of their territory; but even with this most extensive destruction of the condemned nations, would the Jews have been equally guarded against the contagion of idolatry, from every surrounding state? Would they have been filled with the same terror of impiety, superstitious cruelty and licentiousness, as when they themselves were compelled to become executioners of divine vengeance for these crimes? Assuredly not. With the strong tendency to imitate the manners and

* It has gratified me to find that the reasons here adduced, agree with those of Mr. Cappe, in his Essay on the idea of Judaism, and his *Critical* Remarks, Vol. II. p. 221.

adopt the corruptions of idolatry, which the Jews afterwards displayed, it seems probable that, if this scheme had not been adopted, to alienate them as strongly as possible from its votaries, nothing could have prevented their immediate and total apostasy; but miraculously rendering the surrounding world a wilderness, or restraining the Jewish nation, by some uninterrupted and supernatural force, from all commerce with every other people.

Thus wild, unnatural and impracticable, are the expedients which seem necessary to be substituted, when we suppose any departure from what has been the real process of the divine dispensations. Is it not then irrational and unjust, to accuse this part of the divine economy as too severe, when it is certain it was barely severe enough to effect the preservation of the word and worship of the one true God, in a single nation? Is it not unjust to charge it with a tendency to deprave the morals of the Jews, when it seems to have been the only effectual method of inspiring them with a detestation of all the foulest crimes to the seduction of which they were most exposed, and impressing a fearful apprehension of the punishment which must attend their perpetration?

But the punishment of the Canaanites by the sword of th Jews, rather than by any other mode, seems to have promoted the objects of the divine economy, not only by rendering it more practicable to keep the chosen people a separate race, alienated from the society and guarded against the seductions of idolaters, but by PREPARING THE WAY, FOR TERMINATING THE MIRACULOUS INTERPOSITION UNDER WHICH IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO DIICIPLINE THE JEWISH NATION, leaving at the same time such deep and awful impressions on their mind, as ought to preserve them permanently obedient to the divine Law.

The great support of idol worship was the fixed opinion, that the idols of each nation were its faithful guardian gods, securing its temporal prosperity, and above all, its success in war; combating on the side of their votaries, with an effect proportioned to the power of their supposed divinity, and establishing the value of their protection by the greatness of the victories they achieved. This strong principle of idolatrous seduction nothing could so effectually counteract, as the abundant experimental proof which the Jews received, that the ONE ONLY TRUE GOD, JEHOVAH, their guardian God, and immediate sovereign Lord,

was in this, as in every other respect, decidedly superior to all the Gentile idols confederated together; and, that as He had promised to be "an enemy to their enemies, and an adversary "to their adversaries," so He was able effectually to fulfil his promise of "sending his fear before them, and destroying all the "people to whom they should come, and making all their "enemies turn their backs unto them."* And as their confidence in the divine protection was thus established, by their being made the instruments of exterminating the Canaanites, more than it could have been by any other possible mode of effecting their settlement in the promised land; so by the very same dispensation was a salutary terror impressed upon them, preparing them for being governed without any further continued miraculous interposition. Their God had denounced against them, that if they forsook his worship and violated his Law, he would cause them to be † "smitten before their ene-"mies; that they should go out one way against them, and flee "seven ways before them: and that they should be removed "into all the kingdoms of the earth." They now clearly perceived the full power of God to execute this dread denunciation; they *now felt practically and decisively the power of* JEHOVAH *to make man the instrument of punishing idolatry, however previously unwilling, or apparently unable, to inflict this punishment:* they were now experimentally convinced, that no military superiority of multitude or discipline could protect them from the sword of their enemies, or preserve their nation from total destruction, if they forsook the covenant of their God. Hence, after their settlement in the land of Canaan, the terror which the hostility of the surrounding nations inspired was fitted to become the principal check to restrain them from idolatry; they were prepared to recognise in their defeats the effect of divine displeasure, and the arm of man was fitted to become the instrument of that punishment which their God might determine to inflict. Thus the scheme of discipline and correction which Divine Wisdom judged it necessary to exercise over his chosen people, was conducted by a system which was easily connected with the common course of events, and assimilated to and blended with the general, and, as it were, natural progress of the providential administration of human affairs.

In this view, the punishment of the Canaanites by the sword

* Exod. xxiii. 27. † Deut. xxviii. 25.

of the Jews, rather than by any other means seems a *necessary part* of the divine economy; and the event proves, that the rigour and extent of that punishment were not *greater* than the objects of that economy indispensably required; for if the dreadful example then exhibited in all its terrors to the Jews, and imprinted, one would suppose, indelibly on their hearts, was yet insufficient to prevent them from yielding frequently to the seductions of idolatry, what must have been the result, had no such severity of discipline been employed? Assuredly the exclusive worship of Jehovah could not have been preserved beyond a single generation, or restored by a less signal or prolonged display of miracles, than that which was first employed to establish it. Now, either the total abolition of true religion, or its repeated restoration by such repeated and continued interruptions of the course of nature, and the regular tenor of the providential government of man, seem utterly inconsistent with the purposes of the divine dispensations.

The TREATMENT OF THE AMALEKITES has also been considered as a great difficulty. Much of what has been said as to the treatment of the Canaanites applies to it; but it has its particular circumstances, which it becomes necessary briefly to consider.

The first notice of the Amalekites is in Exodus, where it is said,* "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Re-"phidim." Their miraculous defeat is there recorded, and the monument which Moses set up to preserve the memory of it, and the orders of God concerning it. "And the Lord "said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, "and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly "put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-"NISSI †; for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn, that the "Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to genera-"tion." But in the recapitulation ‡ of this history, Moses

* Exod. xvii. from 8 to the end.

† "The Lord my banner." The next verse ought, as seems to me, to be translated, "For he said, Because the hand of the Lord shall be for ever "upon the banners of war against Amalek." This translation is justified, by changing כס "a throne," into נס "a banner:" the alteration was proposed by Houbigant, and seems preferable to any other. Those readings proposed by Le Clerc in locum, and by Shuckford, Vol. III. p. 31, seem, though ingenious, not so natural. Vide Dodd's note on the passage.

‡ Deut. xxv. 17.

mentions the particulars, which prove this to have been an hostility on the part of the Amalekites totally unprovoked, and attended with very aggravating circumstances. "Remember," says he, "what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye "were come forth out of Egypt; how He *met* * thee by the "way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were "feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and HE "FEARED NOT GOD. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy "God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, "in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inhe-"ritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance "of Amalek from under heaven: thou shalt not forget it."

Here then, the divine command to exterminate Amalek as a nation, is grounded, first, on their conduct towards the chosen people of God. They had displayed in their attack on them, a spirit of unprovoked, cruel, treacherous and inveterate hostility. It was unprovoked, because there appears no reason to believe that the Jews had the remotest intention of either injuring their persons or seizing on their territory; which does not appear to have formed † any part of that land of which the Jews were commanded by God to take possession. Accordingly we never find the Amalekites mentioned among the nations who were to be expelled from the promised land. It was a cruel, treacherous and inveterate hostility, because they attacked the Jewish host, as appears, by surprise, so as to cut of the hindmost, who were feeble and weary and faint: and surely an enemy acting in such a manner as this, might at that time have been regarded as an inveterate and malignant foe, whose destruction might be considered as almost necessary to the safety of those whom they attacked. But this was not the chief cause of the doom denounced against them; it was not so much the cruelty of their conduct, as the *impiety of their motive* which drew down upon them the divine vengeance: "THEY FEARED NOT GOD." The Amalekites could not but have known the signs and wonders, by which Je-

* In 1 Samuel xv. 2. it is "how he laid wait for him in the way."

† Vide Patrick on Exod. xvii. 8, and Deut. xxv. 17, &c. Universal History, Vol. I. p. 318. Most commentators consider these Amalekites as the descendants of Esau, who would therefore, but for their own misconduct have enjoyed the same exemption from all attempts of the Jews on their territory, as the children of Edom. Vide Deut. ii. 5. But this seems uncertain.

hovah had rescued his chosen people from Egyptian slavery, and declared himself openly their guardian God. They must particularly have known the recent destruction of the Egyptian host in the Red Sea. But the Amalekites, notwithstanding all this, "feared not the God of the Jews:" they set themselves voluntarily and audaciously in direct defiance of the power of Jehovah, and this at a period when this kind of opposition was peculiarly repugnant to the purposes of the divine dispensations; for we are informed, that "God led not his people through the "way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; "for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they "see war, and return to Egypt."* Under these circumstances, the unprovoked, inveterate and presumptuous attack of the Amalekites, must have been considered both by them and the Jews, as a direct insult to the majesty of Jehovah, in his character of peculiar guardian and immediate Lord of this chosen people. It was not consistent with the purposes of the divine economy to vindicate the honour of Jehovah by any general punishment of the Amalekites at that time: their attack was repelled, but not retaliated, nor was their territory invaded. This contemptuous defiance of the power and majesty of God would therefore have appeared to escape with impunity, if no further notice had been taken of it; a circumstance which might have degraded the Deity in the estimation of the Jews, who judged of his power, as all other nations then judged of their guardian gods, by his vigour and promptitude in defending his people and punishing their enemies. This seems to be a reason why God judged it necessary to announce to the Jews, that though he would not at present punish the insult of the Amalekites, he yet would not suffer it to pass finally unpunished; but that he would authorize and employ them to inflict at a remote period, the punishment it merited; thus impressing the Jews themselves with the salutary conviction, that where the Majesty of Jehovah was insulted,† *present delay of punishment afforded no presumption of final impunity.*

In addition to this I would remark, that this sentence was a prophecy as well as a command, repeated afterwards by

* Exod. xiii. 17.

† Vide Butler's Analogy, Part I. ch. ii. p. 56.

Balaam,* and in which the Jews were made the instruments of executing the will of their God, and supplied with a striking proof of the divine foreknowledge of their legislator, which being recalled to their remembrance 400 years after, when Saul was commanded to carry this sentence into execution, tended to impress upon them a salutary awe for the authority, and an humble obedience to the precepts, of the Mosaic Law; *a lesson peculiarly necessary at the beginning of the regal government*, which the people had called for from a certain degree of impatience under that theocracy which God by Moses had established. "When," says Samuel, "ye saw that Nahash the king "of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us; when the Lord your "God was your king. Now therefore, behold the king whom "ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired; and behold, "the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the Lord, "and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the "commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye, and also the "king that reigneth over you, continue following the Lord your "God. But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel "against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of "the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers."† As the great criterion of this obedience, Samuel enjoins on Saul the execution of this command against the Amalekites. They had joined with his numerous and inveterate enemies to destroy him in the infancy of his reign; but the divine aid had given him a victory over the Philistines, and enabled him to extricate himself from his enemies on every side: and now Samuel reminds him, ‡ "That God had anointed him king "over Israel," and informs him, that he in consequence required him to execute his judgments on Amalek; and that the Jews might feel they were acting merely as *executioners of the divine sentence*, and that the war was not undertaken or to be carried on from the common motives of conquest, they were forbidden to make any prisoners, or take any spoil. Saul violated this part of the command, saving the king of the Amalekites, and permitting the people to take of the spoil, under the pretence of offering it to God: but Samuel exposes the shallow

* Numbers xxiv. 20.

† 1 Samuel xii. 12—15.

‡ 1 Sam. xv. 1, &c.

pretext, for he said,* "Hath the Lord as great delight in "burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the "Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, "than the fat of rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, "and stubbornness is iniquity and idolatry. Because thou "hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee "from being king." Thus the original sentence against the Amalekites, and still more its final execution, appears to have tended to impress powerfully upon the Jews, the necessity of obedience to the will, and awe for the majesty of Jehovah; and may therefore have formed a necessary link in the great series of the divine dispensations.

This is the light in which this transaction strikes me. Other writers have observed,† and certainly with truth, that the apparent severity of this sentence is greatly diminished, when we consider that the Amalekites continued to manifest the most hostile disposition to the Hebrew nation, by attacking them whenever they had an opportunity, and joining their enemies upon all occasions to oppress and enslave them.‡ They joined the Canaanites and destroyed many of the people upon their first attempt to enter into Canaan; they, § with the Moabites, went and smote Israel, dispossessed them of the city of Palm-trees, and helped to reduce them to an eighteen years servitude: they also joined with the Midianites to oppress them, and utterly impoverished the Jews by their rapines and plunders, ‖ destroying the increase of the earth, and leaving no sustenance for man or beast; and afterwards in conjunction with the Midianitish army, attacked them in battle. Under Saul's reign, they continued their ravages and violence; and when he had repulsed them, he proceeded, in compliance with the divine sentence, utterly to extirpate them. Thus from the first step to the last, they appear to have pursued the chosen people of God with a deep and unwearied malignity, originally unprovoked, and never to be satisfied, so that, humanly speaking, they drew

* 1 Samuel, xii. ver. 22 & 23.

† Vide Patrick on Exod. xvii. 8. and Deut. xxv. 17; also Poli Synopsis, and Dodd; vide also Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xli. p. 466; Leland's Answer to Tindal, Vol. II. p. 36; Chandler's Life of David, Vol. I. Book I. ch. iv.; and Lectures on the Old Testament, by Samuel Parker, sect. vii. p. 122.

‡ Numbers xiv. 45. § Judges iii. 13 & 14 ‖ Judges vi. 3.

their own fate upon themselves. Their conduct being foretold, and their final punishment being authorized by God, can scarcely be matter of surprise, when we consider the peculiar relation in which Jehovah stood to the Jews, as their tutelary God, and even their natural Sovereign: and Dr. Chandler well remarks concerning this order of God, "If he foresaw that the "safety of his people materially depended upon it, the order "was wisely and justly given; and if they were ripe for that "vengeance, with which they had been threatened above four "hundred years before, and which had been so long mercifully "delayed by the patience of Almighty God, I presume it was no "injustice in him, who best knows the proper seasons of his "own conduct, and is the best judge of the means and instru- "ments to execute his own purposes, to put the sword of justice "into Saul's hand, and command him to cut off those whom he "thought fit to make examples of, for the numerous vices, op- "pressions and cruelties, of which he knew them to be guilty. "Samuel terms them, *those sinners* the Amalekites, to denote, "that even at that time they were a very wicked people; that "they themselves were ripe for the judgments of the Almighty, "and that they were punished for their own sins, though "mention is made of the evil conduct of their ancestors; and it "had been long predicted that Amalek should be destroyed."

The observations here adduced, with regard to the treatment both of the Canaanites and Amalekites, may, it is hoped, diminish somewhat that appearance of contrariety to the benignity of the divine attributes, which at first sight they bear; and tend to develop the connexion of these transactions with the entire scheme of that dispensation, of which they form a part. But the true refutation of the objection derived from these events, is undoubtedly founded on that principle stated in pp. 26 & 27, and defended by Butler and Cumberland in the annexed note. Even the absolute dominion of the supreme God over the lives and properties of all human beings, and his power to transfer that dominion to whomsoever his infinite wisdom shall judge meet, by a clear promulgation of his sovereign will; rendering actions performed in obedience to that will, not only innocent, but instances of obedience and piety; which, without such an authority, must have originated from unjustifiable motives, and therefore have been deservedly condemned as

criminal. To expect that the supreme Governor of the world should, in every instance, disclose to beings such as we are, not only that a particular mode of conduct is certainly commanded, but also all the reasons why it is commanded, is surely most irrational and presumptuous; though, wherever he has thought fit to communicate the reasons of his dispensations, we are bound to trace them with caution, to contemplate them with humility, and to acquiesce in them with gratitude.

It is further objected, that the destruction of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, would afford precedent for continued persecution and butchery, under the pretext of religious zeal; and encourage the Jews to invade, pillage, and exterminate all their weaker neighbours, under the pretence of supporting the dignity, and extending the worship of Jehovah. In answer to this, let it be remembered, that the same divine authority which granted the chosen nation the land of Canaan, fixed limits to their conquest, positively restrained them, as well during their approach to the promised land, as after their settlement in it, from attacking the neighbouring nations. The circumstance of the inhabitants being idolaters did not justify them in invading any country; they were allowed only to take possession of such territories as Jehovah expressly assigned to them. Thus, in their march towards the promised land, they were strictly commanded to take good heed to themselves with respect to the children of Esau: "Meddle not with them," saith the Lord, "for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot "breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a "possession."* With equal strictness were they prohibited from dispossessing the children of Moab and the children of Ammon; yet these three nations were involved in gross idolatry. Indeed the whole constitution of the Jews, religious and political, was admirably calculated to check all spirit of invasion and conquest, though it prepared them effectually for self-defence. The whole nation was so busied in agriculture, as to have neither time nor inclination for war; prohibited from multiplying horses, and obliged to assemble three times a year at a place which the Lord should choose, distant conquests and tedious wars were utterly impossible: so that there was no danger the Jews should conceive they had the smallest right to inflict on other nations

* Deut. ii. 5, 19.

punishments for idolatry, similar to those which they were made the instruments of inflicting on the Canaanites; and the entire tenor of their history proves that such an idea never entered their thoughts. This objection therefore is refuted by the direct letter of the Mosaic Law, and the whole history of the Jewish dispensation.

Still it may be suspected, that to employ the chosen people of God to be the instruments of divine vengeance on a whole nation, however atrocious their guilt, had a tendency to train the people thus employed to deeds of blood, to harden their hearts, and deprave their character. It may be admitted, this objection would have considerable weight, if no care had been taken to guard against this effect: but nothing is more conspicuous than the wise and effectual precautions of the Jewish Lawgiver for this purpose. It has been shewn,* that the tenor of the command given to punish the Canaanites, taught the Jews to regard with abhorrence, not so much the persons of idolaters, as the crime of idolatry; while every thing connected with such false worship, animate and inanimate alike, was devoted to destruction. It has been shewn that the thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, were completely checked and defeated in the Jewish soldiery, by the very conditions on which alone they were enabled to subdue the condemned nations; and that the feelings of national hostility, and personal animosity, were controuled and mitigated, by solemnly enjoining the exercise of as great severity in punishing idolatry among the Jews themselves, as they were compelled to exercise against the condemned nations of Canaan; and it is evident from the event, that it was with reluctance, and only by compulsion they exercised these severities, because, as soon as the impulse of divine control was withdrawn, they ceased to exercise any such severity; and, on the contrary, treated with culpable lenity, and regarded with a dangerous complacency, the remnants of these impious nations, whose total extermination they had been warned was necessary to guard against the contagion of their vices and idolatries. It has also appeared,† from an examination into the established principles and direct precepts of the Jewish Law, that it was calculated to inspire a spirit of universal and active benevolence

* Vide supra.

† Vide Vol. I. Part. II. Lect. II. III. IV.

even to enemies, as far as the peculiar situation of the chosen people would allow; and that it tended to soften and humanise the soul, by cherishing sentiments of sympathy and tenderness, even to the brute creation.

The laws of war* of the Jews towards all nations (the Canaanites and Amalekites excepted) were, for that period of the world, peculiarly humane. No enemy was to be attacked till peace had been offered: on conquest, only the males who had borne arms, were permitted to be put to death, and even of these they might make prisoners: women and children were protected: female captives were guarded from abuse, and treated with tenderness and respect: all unnecessary waste and havoc were strictly forbidden. Strangers and slaves were objects of peculiar attention in the Mosaic Law, and their interests and rights guarded with the most tender humanity. "Thou shalt "not oppress a stranger," says the Law, "for ye know the "heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of "Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. "If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, "saith the Lord, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath "shall wax hot, and I will smite you with the sword; and your "wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou "meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt "surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him "that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear "to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."† Thus also

* Concerning these laws of war, consult Josephus's Antiq. Book IV. sect. xlii. and contra Apion, Book II. sect. xxx. In concurrence with the most respectable rabbies, and the general tradition of the Jews, he interprets Deut. xx. 13, only to imply a permission, not a command, "Thou mayest "kill (not thou shalt kill) the males, that is, the adult males;" or as Josephus interprets it, "those who had borne arms against them," which at that time included all the adult males. Compare 2 Kings, vi. 22, which, however interpreted, shews an instance of mercy to prisoners by express divine authority. Selden, de Jure Gentium apud Hebræos, Lib. VI. cap. xvi. Vol. I. p. 673, quotes various authorities to shew the Jews were authorized to spare all prisoners who would become proselytes (even of the seven nations,) as there would then be no danger of learning abominations from them; Deut. xx. 18; and he proves it was an ancient tradition among the Jews, that in besieging a city, an interval was to be left, to give the besieged an opportunity of escaping. For the treatment of female captives, consult Philo de Charitate, p. 547. And on the Laws of War, vide Jew's Letters to Voltaire, Vol. II. Letter III.; and Leland's Answer to Morgan, ch. iv.

† Exod. xxiii. 9. xxii. 22.—24. xxiii. 4, 5.

the most sacred ordinances of religion, were stated to have a reference to the comforts of the poor, and the ease even of inferior animals. When the land was to rest each Sabbatic year, the Lawgiver assigns as a reason, "Ye shall let it rest; that the "poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave, the beasts "of the field shall eat."* Thus also as to the Sabbath day: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou "shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son "of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed."† "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. ‡ If "a bird's nest chance to be before thee, and the dam sitting upon "her young, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; thou "shalt in any wise let the dam go, that it may be well with "thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days." § These were precepts inculcating humanity to the most helpless of inferior animals, with an anxiety and solemnity unparalleled, I do not hesitate to say, in any code of laws ancient or modern. And shall we, notwithstanding all this, stigmatise the Jewish system as sanguinary and cruel; because under an express divine command, and for the important purposes of establishing in one chosen people the worship of the true God, and the principles of pure morality, and above all, for the purpose of preparing for the Gospel scheme, it commanded the extermination of one impious, polluted and cruel nation; thus inculcating the horror of idolatry on the Jews, who were to be treated with similar severity for similar crimes; thus also proving the superiority of Jehovah over the idols of Canaan, and the terrors of the divine wrath against the vices pursued with such signal vengeance, in the only way at once intelligible and impressive, amidst a people dull and worldly minded, seldom extending their views beyond temporal rewards and punishments, and who by these means only could be disciplined and controlled, so as afterwards to be governed in a mode coincident with the general course of divine administration? Surely to neglect the various circumstances which thus explain and vindicate the severity exercised against the Canaanites by the divine command, and on account of these reject the whole scheme of revelation, would be a degree of

* Exod. xxiii. 11.
† Exod. xxiii. 12.
‡ Deut. xxv. 4.
§ Ib. xxii. 6

incredulity and presumption, equally irrational and irreligious. Far be this from us, my brethren: be it ours to weigh the dispensations of Providence with more humility, and derive, from the severity, as well as the mercy, of the divine administration, new motives to persevering watchfulness and holy obedience.

LECTURE II.

CONDUCT OF THE JEWS.

SECT. I.—*Objection against the reality of the Mosaic miracles, derived from the frequent idolatries of the Jews, invalid—These idolatries did not prove any doubt of the divine original of the Mosaic Law—First species of idolatry by forbidden symbols, &c.—Whence so frequent—Implied acknowledgment of Jehovah—Second species of idolatrous worship, in forbidden places, and with idolatrous rites, implied the same—Third species, worship of idols with Jehovah—Whence—Fourth, worship of idols without God—Yet not an absolute denial of God, or rejection of his worship—Defects and apostacies of the Jews confirm the certainty of a divine interposition, rather than weaken it—Objection against the divine economy, from the temptations they were exposed to, unreasonable—Residence of Jews in Egypt considered—And the temptations from the surrounding Canaanites—Degree and duration of the divine interposition suited to the analogy of nature—Mr. Gibbon accuses the Jews, falsely, of being indifferent spectators of the most amazing miracles.*

JOSHUA, XXIV. 31.

"And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived "Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel."

IT has frequently been asserted by infidels, that the repeated relapses of the Jews into idolatry, at various periods of their history, render the reality of the Mosaic miracles suspicious. For, as these writers conceive, it is not credible that the witnesses of such stupendous miracles, or their immediate posterity, could have so soon forgotten the divine power thus awfully enforced. But these reasoners entirely mistake the nature of this apostacy, and forget the character of the people among whom, and the period when, it took place.* These relapses into idolatry never implied a rejection of Jehovah as their God, or of the Mosaic Law, as if they doubted of its truth. The Jewish idolatry consisted, first, in worshipping the true God by images and symbols; such were the golden calf of Aaron, those afterwards set up by Jeroboam in Israel, the ephod of Gideon, and the ephod, the teraphim and the images

* Vide Warburton's Divine Legation, Book, V. sect. ii. v. vi. 197 to 201.

of Micah. But in every one of those instances, far from rejecting Jehovah as their God, the images, symbols and rites employed, were designed to honor him, by imitating the manner in which the most distinguished nations the Jews were acquainted with worshipped their supreme divinities; or they were assimilated to the Mosaic institutions, as far as the peculiar views of their authors would admit. Thus the golden calf which the people compelled Aaron to form, was probably an imitation of the Egyptian representative of Osiris, but certainly intended as a representative of that Jehovah, who had brought * the Jews out of Egypt; as on forming it, Aaron proclaimed a feast to be held to Jehovah. The golden calves, set up by the first king of the ten tribes, were also probably imitations of the Egyptian symbols, with which Jeroboam must have been familiarized during his residence in Egypt,† for the five last years of Solomon's reign; but certainly intended to represent the same God who was worshipped at Jerusalem, who had brought Israel out of Egypt, and in imitation of the Mosaic institutions; the king ordaining a feast like unto the "feast (of tabernacles) that is in Judah." And of Micah we are told, that the silver, of which the images were made, ‡ "had been wholly dedicated to Jehovah, to make a graven "image and a molten image." And when he had found a Levite to officiate as his priest, he is represented as declaring, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have "a Levite for my priest." So obstinate was the attachment of the Jews to idolatrous symbols, and so dull their sense of the necessity of worshipping their God in that manner which he himself required. A principal cause of this inattention to the divine prohibitions seems to have been, that the law was not read, as it regularly should have been, to the people: and when the Shechinah, or visible splendor of the divine glory, had ceased to appear in the tabernacle, and the unsettled state of society, and frequent wars under the Judges, and the permanent hostility between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, rendered it difficult or inconvenient to meet at that place which the Lord had chosen, each tribe or family adopted the idea of making a sanctuary in their own city or their own house, and setting up there some symbol of the Divine Presence imitated

* Exod. xxxii. 4. † 1 Kings, xi. 40. ‡ Judges xvii. 3, 13.

from their neighbours, as a substitute for the Shechinah, and some rites of worship in imitation of the worship at the tabernacle. But this no more implies a rejection of the Mosaic Law, than the idolatry of Roman Catholics implies a rejection of the Gospel.

The next species of idolatry, was worshipping the true God in forbidden places, on high hills and under groves; which it is yet certain did not proceed from any doubt of the existence or divinity of the true Jehovah, but from the same proneness to admire and imitate the superstitions of the neighbouring nations, which we noticed in the former case. Many of these superstitious observances, we find, prevailed during the reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat, who yet utterly prohibited and strictly punished all direct idolatry;* but could not overcome the rooted attachment of the people to these favourite places of worship: "The high places were not taken away; for the "people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places." And in another passage we find this remarkable and decisive testimony on this subject: "Nevertheless the people did sacrifice "still upon the high places, yet unto the Lord their God "only."

A similar observation may be made on the observance of idolatrous rites, which, instead of implying a rejection of the Mosaic ritual, were, however strangely and criminally, yet not unfrequently, combined with it. Thus we are told,† "four-"score men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, "and having cut themselves," (contrary to the express direction of the Law, yet) proceeding "with offerings and incense in "their hands, to bring them to the house of the Lord." Thus Isaiah‡ complains, "I will recompense into their bosom your "iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith "the Lord, which have burnt incense upon the mountains, and "blasphemed me upon the hills."

Another and more criminal species of idolatry was,§ joining the worship of God and idols together; a practice which the principle, borrowed from the heathens, of an intercommunity

* 1 Kings, xv. 13, 14, and xxii. 43. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17.

† Compare Deut. xiv. 1. and Lev. xix. 27, 28. with Jeremiah, xli. 5.

‡ Isaiah, lxv. 6, 7.

§ Vide on this subject Warburton's Divine Legation, B. II. Sect. vi. and B. V. Sect. ii. Vol. IV. p. 212; and Law's Theory of Religion, p. 85.

of gods, sanctioned, and the apparent policy of conciliating the guardian gods of Canaan encouraged; but which still preserved the acknowledgment and worship of Jehovah.

"In these principles of intercommunity," says Warburton, "they saw the whole race of mankind agree; and from the "practice of them in the worship of tutelar deities, they thought "they saw a world of good ready to arise. But not only the "hope of good, but the fear of evil, drew them still more "strongly into this road of folly. Their Egyptian education "had early impressed that bugbear notion of a set of local "deities, who expected their dues of all who came to inhabit "the country which they had honoured with their protection, "and severely resented the neglect of payment in all new "comers. This will easily account for the frequent defections "of the Israelites, in the divided service of the gods of "Canaan."

The last and most flagrant species of idolatry, was the worship of idols without God. Yet even here they did not so much reject the true God, as conceive that intermediate and subordinate deities were those only with whom they had immediate concern, and from whose hand they must expect all temporal blessings. In truth, the temptations to some or all those kinds of idolatry were so powerful, from errors in opinion wide spread, and sanctioned by the Egyptians, the wisest, and the Canaanites, the most warlike people in the world, and strengthened by the habitual attachment of the Jews to the idols, the symbols and the rites of Egypt, as well as the sensual allurements of idolatrous worship, and the overpowering terrors of idolatrous superstitions; that we have reason to wonder that the Jews, dull, sensual, and stubborn as they were, could by any system of discipline be effectually corrected and ultimately reformed, so as at length to forsake idolatry, as after the Babylonish captivity they certainly did—rather than just cause to

Vide also Mede's Apostasy of the latter Times, Part. I. ch. ii. Vol. II. of his Works, p. 772, and ch. ix. p. 795. Thus Æneas, on his landing in Italy, Æneid, Lib. VII. 135:—

..... "Geniumque loci, primamque Deorum
"Tellurem, nymphasque et adhuc ignota precatur
"Numina.....

Vide also Macrobii Saturnalia, Lib. III. cap. ix. de Evocandis Diis tutelaribus.

suspect no such system of divine superintendence and control was really exercised, because they frequently relapsed into it.

In reality, the defects, and even the apostacies of the Jews magnify the divine power and wisdom, which, by such apparently inadequate instruments, effected the gracious purpose of preserving in the world the principles of true religion and sound morality, when all the philosophic and celebrated nations of the earth sunk every day deeper in idolatry and corruption of manners. Had a nation, as celebrated for mystery and wisdom as the Egyptians, for literature and genius as the Greeks, for policy and success as the Romans, been made the channel of conveying to us the revelations of God, it would have been difficult to persuade the sceptic that the scheme had not originated in the wisdom and policy of the first rulers of the state, and been acquiesced in, from the admiration with which the enlightened part of the people regarded the system and its authors, and the credulity with which the multitude received a scheme flattering their national vanity, and adapted to their intellectual character and taste. But amongst the Jews, particularly under their judges, the Mosaic law received no support from any permanent authority, or the influence of any set of men possessing a decided mental superiority; while it was evidently contrary to the sensual appetites and idolatrous propensities of the great bulk of the nation.

But the most remarkable circumstance in the various Jewish apostacies, seems to be this, that it was only in their prosperity the Mosaic law was neglected and violated; in adversity, when reflection was awakened, and seriousness restored, they always cried to their God as the only sure source of deliverance, and as uniformly received the deliverance they sought. Surely this can be accounted for only on the supposition, that the Mosaic law was really dictated by a divine authority, and continually supported by a divine interposition.

It may however be asked, Why did God expose the Jewish people to such multiplied temptations to forsake his law? Why suffer them to continue in Egypt, until they contracted so strong an attachment to Egyptian manners, symbols and idolatries? Why afterwards permit so many remnants of the idolatrous and depraved Canaanites to remain in the midst of them? And why leave them at any time without a regular supreme judge, evidently invested with such plain divine autho-

rity as would retain them in constant obedience? To all this, it may be answered, that if we could give no solution to those queries, it would not affect the direct proofs that the Jewish scheme was really a divine dispensation; and that so long as these proofs remain unconfuted, it is more presumptuous than wise to insist upon knowing why God did not act differently from what he has done. But though this would be a rational and adequate answer to objections of such a nature, yet in the instances alluded to, it has pleased Divine Providence to allow us some insight into the direct reasons of its dispensations, which we may without presumption endeavour to develop, in order to the best of our power to "vindicate the ways of God to man."

To the query, Why did God suffer his chosen people to continue in Egypt until they contracted so strong a relish for Egyptian manners and Egyptian idolatries? it may be answered, That when God determined to preserve in one nation the principles of true religion and moral duty, in opposition to the universal idolatry and corruption of mankind, the mode of effecting this purpose, most analogous to the regular course of nature, was, by selecting a particular individual of distinguished piety and virtue, raising from him a family, and from that family a nation, which, by the regular transmission of parental instruction, should be trained up in the principles of their first ancestor; and being protected and disciplined by the peculiar care of Providence, should remain the depositary and example of true religion, until the fulness of time, when Divine Wisdom perceived this sacred treasure might be opened to mankind in general, with advantage and effect. But as all God's dispensations are in a moral way, and adapted to the nature of rational agents, all these methods of instruction and discipline would be so conducted, as to leave human actions in their former state of freedom. Hence this chosen family and people must be subject, like all others, to the influence of example, and the trials which the state of mankind in that age would naturally induce. In their progressive increase from a family to a nation, they must, *wherever* they were placed, in a world *universally idolatrous* and depraved, have been exposed to the contagion of irreligion, and vice. The objection, that they had been so exposed, would therefore have been equally plausible and equally false, vary their situation as you please; except

indeed these objectors to revealed religion, because founded in a miraculous interposition, conceive this chosen family should have been miraculously placed in solitude, and secluded from all commerce with the rest of mankind, till, by a perpetual exertion of miraculous instruction, miraculous civilization, and miraculous support, which such a solitude would have required, they had multiplied to a nation, and thence were miraculously produced, to astonish and reform the world, notwithstanding their total ignorance of the character of those whom they were designed to instruct, and their entire unacquaintedness with, and consequent unfitness to resist, those temptations to which they must be exposed. Such are the wild ideas on which superficial thinkers object to the divine economy.

But why, it is asked, was *Egypt* chosen as their residence, the parent of idolatry and superstition? To this it may be answered, that there was no spot in the civilized world where so many causes concurred to prevent the Israelites from imbibing deeply and permanently the contagion of idolatry, or from being seduced by the depraved examples around them, as in Egypt. At their very first introduction into the country they were, as shepherds, peculiarly mean and contemptible, or, as the sacred text expresses it, * "an abomination to the Egyptians:" and so strong was this aversion, that "the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians." Their religion was not less an object of aversion than their profession, for they used, in sacrifice † to

* Genesis xlvi. 34, and xliij. 32,

† Exod. viii. 26. That the idolatrous worship of different animals amongst the Egyptians was the source of mutual aversion, sometimes even stimulating them to mutual war, we have the testimony of Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride; and of Juvenal, Sat. xv. line 33 :—

——— Summus utrinque
Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, cum solos credat habendos,
Esse deos quos ipse colit, &c.

And Tacitus, noticing the opposition between the customs of the Jews and the Egyptians, remarks, "Cæso ariete velut in contumeliam Hammonis, bos "quoque immolatur quem Ægyptii Apim colunt." Herodotus, Euterpe, cap. lxiv. p. 107, 108, notices this diversity of animal worship, and the aversion of some Egyptians to the persons employed to attend certain animals. And it is possible, from this diversity of sentiment, that Pharaoh might have flocks and herds, and might at the same time wish to employ persons different from the native Egyptians, in the care of them. Yet the testimony of Diodorus Siculus seems to show, that of the native Egyptians one class were shepherds. Vide Diodorus, Lib. I. sect, ii. In truth, such was the variety of opinions and customs amongst the different inhabitants of

God, the same animals which the Egyptians worshipped, and thus "sacrificed the abomination of the Egyptians." Add to this, that they were placed in a distinct province, where they were preserved a separate body; and what is most important of all, that for a long series of years, towards the conclusion of their stay, the Egyptians oppressed them with the most cruel slavery; * "they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, "in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the "field;" and finally attempted totally to destroy the nation, by ordering all their male children to be put to death. Surely all this naturally tended to inspire the Jews with aversion to the manners, the idolatry, and the vices of their oppressors, and led

Egypt at different times, it is not wonderful much obscurity and difference of opinion should be found to exist in different writers concerning it, which the brevity of the Mosaic history does not dispel. But surely this supplies not the smallest presumption against the truth of the sacred narrative. Vide Poli Synopsis, Le Clerc and Patrick, on Genesis xliii. 32. and xlvi. 34. and Exodus viii. 26; who have collected the various opinions on this subject. Mr. Bryant, in his Observations on the ancient History of Egypt, has a distinct *Dissertation on the Shepherds of Egypt and the Land of Goshen*, p. 140; and, from a minute examination of ancient history, particularly of Manetho and Josephus, seems to account much more satisfactorily than any preceding writer, for the circumstances mentioned in the sacred history. I will conclude this note by citing one passage from him, which contains his chief conclusions on this subject. After citing Exod. viii. 26, he observes, "The abomination of the Egyptians was a sacrifice of blood; which "offering was so offensive to the Egyptians, that the Israelites could not "venture on it. The offerings of the Egyptians consisted in the fruits "of the earth: on the other hand, the shepherd's increase was from the "fold only, and his offerings were the firstlings of his flock. This made the "Egyptians dislike shepherds, not their occupation, than which nothing was "more innocent or necessary. Besides, they had flocks of their own, and "consequently people to tend them. But they disliked *foreign shepherds*, "on account of their different rites and customs; which hatred must have "arisen from an intimate intercourse, for we do not abominate what we are "little acquainted with. We may dislike at a distance, and disapprove; "but this was a total abhorrence, it was a general and national disgust, "to promote which, many things must have concurred. In the first place, "the Egyptians were a fastidious people from the beginning, and held every "nation but their own in low esteem. The Egyptians (says Herodotus) call "all men Barbarians, who do not speak the same language with themselves. "This contempt was carried into disgust, by the contrariety in their "religious customs; and this still heightened and embittered by the tyranny "of the pastor kings, and the cruel usage that the Egyptians experienced "from them; particularly when they broke down the shrines of their gods, "and overturned their altars. Hence arose that fixed hatred we have been "speaking of, which was prior to the coming of the Israelites; for 'every "shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians,' before they knew Joseph. "The reigns therefore of the Cusean kings were antecedent likewise." On these pastor kings, vide Bryant, p. 143, &c. On the situation and fertility of the land of Goshen, vide ibid. p. 154, et seq.

* Exod. i. 14.

them to accept with joy the promised settlement in the land of Canaan, combined with submission to that system of religion and government which God meant to establish. If they still retained some veneration for Egyptian manners and idolatry, because they were the manners and the idolatry of a great and celebrated nation, the mode in which God delivered them from this land of bondage was calculated to counteract this effect; for they beheld Jehovah with a mighty hand inflicting the severest plagues on Pharaoh and all his people; making the elements and the creatures which they worshipped, * the instruments of their chastisement, and involving the animals, whom they adored as gods, in one common punishment with their deluded votaries: "Executing judgment" (as the sacred historian declares) "upon the gods of Egypt."† Thus chastising superstition in the very country that was its source, and magnifying the majesty of God on the most conspicuous stage then in the world, in the country the most famed for arts and learning, and most frequented by men of genius and curiosity.

* Vide on this subject Hutchinson's Essay towards a Natural History of the Bible, or Bryant's learned and ingenious treatise on the Plagues of Egypt. I consider the coincidence between these works as a strong confirmation of the truth of the arguments they adduce, for I am fully persuaded, Mr. Bryant did not know any such observations had been made by Hutchinson. Vide his preface. Idolaters, says Hutchinson, ascribed all power to the machine of the heavens, in the condition of fire, light and air: hence, at the establishment of the Mosaic economy, God appeared to Moses in the bush in the form of fire, &c.: hence the multiplied miracles in Egypt showed the superiority of Jehovah over all the gods of the Egyptians, in their pretended attributes and power: thus the *river* turned into blood, though emblematically sacred; the *wind* brought locusts to destroy the votaries of the wind; the *air* rendered pestilential; the dust of the *earth* noxious; the wind made the waters of the Red Sea stand on an heap; the plague of darkness showed the absolute power of God over the air; the murrain was on beasts, who were the *representatives* of the *Egyptian gods*, thus destroyed through the instrumentality of that air which was itself considered as divine; thus the first-born had, in many cases, as Hutchinson thinks, been sacrificed to the false gods, and were now in punishment destroyed by Jehovah. Vide Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 126, and sequel.

Mr. Bryant, without adopting the particular system of Hutchinson, or even (I am persuaded) knowing that he had thus supported it, was led on by his own reflections and researches to form the same opinion, and has established it, as it appears to me, irrefutably, by a variety of facts and illustrations; proving his principle, by showing its application to every one of the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians: for instance, in the circumstance recorded, that the "fish in the river died," see his proofs of the idolatrous veneration in which the fish of the Nile were held, p. 27 to 35; and on the plague of flies, which he also proves were objects of worship, from p. 65 to 84. But, for full conviction, I refer my reader to the Work itself.

† Exod. xii. 12.

It is further admitted, that the system of the Jewish ritual, in various respects, was calculated to proscribe and counteract * the idolatries and superstitions of Egypt. That all these judgments and all these precautions did not produce, upon the dull and carnal-minded Jews, such decisive effects as to root out all propensity to imitate or adopt the superstitions of Egypt, which they had seen admired and practised by this the most celebrated nation in the world, is not wonderful. But surely no human wisdom can presume to assert, that any other scheme of settlement or discipline could have been better calculated to prevent amongst the Jews the growth of idolatry and its attendant crimes.

The defeat of the warlike Canaanites, who were † "great "and tall, and their cities walled up to heaven," by the unwarlike Jews, and this by means proving a supernatural interference, had a similar tendency to establish the superiority of Jehovah over all the celebrated idols of Canaan: nor can we conceive any mode of providence better calculated to preserve among the chosen people the observance of the divine institutions.

As to the trials the Jews were exposed to from the example of the neighbouring countries, and particularly from the corruptions of the Canaanites, many of whom they permitted to remain amongst them; it is evident, that *wherever* they were settled in an idolatrous world, they would have been exposed to similar danger, from the depraved examples of the surrounding nations. But it seems impossible to conceive any system more wisely calculated to check such contagion, than that which was adopted in the settlement of the Jews in the promised land. They were previously disciplined forty years, until the generation who had from their birth been infected by the contagion of Egyptian idolatry, and debased by the degradation of Egyptian slavery, had completely perished, and made way for a more pure, free-born, and noble-minded race, who might be trained under the immediate miraculous control of God in the wilderness, to submit implicitly to the divine direction, and aspire after the divine

* Some instances of this are adduced, p. 149, in the note. Consult also Witsii Egyptiaca, Lib. III. cap. xiv. from sect. iv. to x.; Lowman on the Hebrew Ritual, Part I. ch. ii. & iii. and Part II. ch. v.; and Grotius on Exod. xx. and Lev. xviii.; but especially Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xlvi. to xlix.

† Deut. i. 28.

favour. They were defeated by the Canaanites when they attacked them without divine permission, to make them feel experimentally, that they must ascribe all their future success against them to the protection of Jehovah. The conquest of the promised land was effected by the miraculous assistance of God, who declared, that the Canaanites were to be exterminated in consequence of their idolatries and crimes, and commanded the Israelites to execute the divine sentence. They were punished by certain defeat when they violated, and crowned with certain victory when they obeyed, this direction of their God; until their settlement in the promised land was so far completed, that the few remaining Canaanites were totally in their power, and all necessity for supernatural assistance to their arms, in the execution of the divine command, had plainly ceased.

Thus far Providence had, as it were, *compelled* them to proceed; still however observing in this, as in every other supernatural dispensation, a due analogy to the regular course of nature, and the moral agency of man. "The Lord thy God (says their legislator) "will put out these nations before thee by little and "little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beast "of the field increase before thee; but the Lord thy God shall "deliver them unto thee; and destroy them with a mighty des-"truction until they be destroyed."* And in another place we perceive an effect of leaving some remnants of the Canaanites, perfectly analogous to the course of nature, assigned as a reason why God permitted it: "That the generations of the Children "of Israel might know, to teach them war: as many as had not "known all the wars of Canaan."†

Thus the Canaanites were expelled as rapidly as the nature of things could admit. The Jews were strictly commanded to complete their expulsion, fully empowered to do so, and warned of the guilt of neglecting it; the temptation it would expose them to, and the certain punishment that would await their transgression: but they disobeyed the divine command.‡ "It "came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the "Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out." Or, as their historian Josephus § more fully explains it, "Con-

* Deut. vii. 22 & 23.

† Judges iii. 1 & 2.

‡ Judges i. 28. Vide the entire second and third chapters of Judges.

§ Vide Josephus's Antiquities, Book V. sect. vii.

"tenting themselves with the tributes which were paid them, "they grew effeminate as to fighting any more against their "enemies; but applied themselves to the cultivation of their "lands, which, producing them great plenty and riches, they "neglected the regular disposition of their settlement, and in- "dulged themselves in luxuries and pleasures." And now the Lord sent an angel unto them, who reminded them of the divine command:* "I said, ye shall make no league with the in- "habitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but "ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? "Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before "you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods "shall be a snare unto you:" or, as it is more fully expressed in another passage,† where the sacred historian relates, that on account of their evil ways, "the anger of the Lord was hot "against Israel: and he said, Because this people hath trans- "gressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and "have not hearkened unto my voice; I also will not henceforth "drive out from before them, of the nations which Joshua left, "when he died: that through them I may prove Israel, whether "they will keep the way of the Lord, to walk therein as their "fathers did keep it, or not. Therefore the Lord left those "nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered "he them into the hand of Joshua."

Thus God continued his miraculous agency only so long as was indispensably necessary to introduce and settle the Jewish nation in the land of their inheritance, and establish this dispensation, so as to answer the purposes of the divine economy. After this, he gradually withdrew his supernatural assistance; he left the nation, collectively and individually, to act according to their own choice, not unnaturally and violently counteracting their moral character, and destroying their free agency. The people, at the rebuke of the Lord, mentioned above, "lifted up "their voices and wept, and they sacrificed there unto the "Lord." "But," says Josephus, "though they were in heavi- "ness at these admonitions from God, they were still very "unwilling to go to war." Yet though thus left to themselves, the effect of the wonders they had already seen, and the discipline they had been trained under, produced on that generation

* Judges ii. 1. 3. † Ib. ver. 20—23.

a *decisive and permanent effect*; "For the people served the Lord "all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that out-"lived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord "that he did for Israel."

Indeed we cannot desire a stronger proof of the zeal of the whole nation for the observance of the divine Law, than the transaction between the two tribes and a half who were settled beyond Jordan, and the remaining tribes; on the termination of the general war against the Canaanites, and the dismissal of the several tribes to their respective inheritance. Here we see the two tribes and a half building an altar at the passage of Jordan, a pattern (or after the pattern) of the altar of the Lord.* The remaining congregation, alarmed at the idea of this being a rebellion against God, who had commanded that there should be only one altar for all his people, prepared to punish it by instant war, but first send ambassadors to expostulate: "Thus saith "the whole congregation of the Lord, What trespass is this that "ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away "this day from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you "an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the Lord? Is "the iniquity of Baal Peor too little for us, from which we are "not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the "congregation of the Lord? and it will be, seeing that ye rebel "against the Lord, that to-morrow he will be wroth with all "the congregation of Israel." And the two tribes and a half answered: "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods "knoweth, and Israel he shall know, if it be in rebellion, or if "in transgression against the Lord (save us not this day) that "we have built us an altar; but that it may be a witness "between us and you, and our generations after us, that we "might do the service of the Lord before him; that your "children may not say to our children, Ye have no part in the "Lord. God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and "turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for "burnt-offerings, for meat-offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the "altar of the Lord our God before his tabernacle." So deep was the impression which the judgments of God had made on the whole nation; so watchful their anxiety to fulfil the Law, and avoid the wrath of Jehovah, at once their Sovereign

* Joshua xxii.

and their God; and so gross is the *misrepresentation of Mr. Gibbon*,* when he asserts, that "the cotemporaries of Moses "and Joshua beheld with indifference the most amazing mira- "cles." The very reverse of this assertion is evidently the truth.

SECT. II.—*The conduct of the Jews, subsequent to the death of Joshua, is not inconsistent with the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Situation of the Jews under their judges, adapted to the purposes of the divine economy—Expediency of placing them in this situation—Severity of the punishment inflicted by Providence for their offences, no valid objection—Establishment of the kingly government a confirmation of the authenticity of the Pentateuch—Why desired by the people—Why permitted by God—Theocracy preserved under their kings—Illustrates the nature of the divine control over the Jews—And of the Jewish character—Both show the credibility of the Jewish idolatries, notwithstanding the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Separation of the ten tribes an apparent objection—Its origin—Idolatry of Solomon—Inference from it as to the idolatries of the Jews—Separation of the two kingdoms, why expedient—How effected—Its natural tendency—Abused by Jeroboam—Even his conduct confirms the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Schism he introduces consistent with that belief—Gave occasion to manifest the divine providence, in the history of the ten tribes—Effects of this separation on the two tribes—Instanced in the history of Abijah—Of Rehoboam—Of Asa—Of Hezekiah—General reflection on the providential government of the Jews—On the caution to be exercised in estimating the characters described in the Old Testament—And the effects of the Jewish scheme.*

IN the former section we noticed the strong impression which the divine interpositions had made on those who were witnesses of them; insomuch, "That the people served the Lord all the "days of Joshua, and of the Elders who outlived Joshua, who "had seen the great works of the Lord." That this impression however, should not be permanent enough to preserve the Jews from corrupting their religion and their morals, by imitating the idolatries and vices of the Canaanites, their neighbours, will not seem wonderful, if we consider that the Jews were, at this period, mere children in moral and religious conduct, as is most evident from the whole tenor of the Scripture narrative. They were very inattentive to the history of past transactions, so that many of the very next generation after Joshua, "knew

* Vol. I. ch. xv. p. 457.

not," that is, they considered not, and therefore acted as if they had not known, the wonders which God had wrought for Israel. The temptations to intermarry with their neighbours, and adopt their manners and worship, were too powerful for their unsteady and carnal minds: the beauty of the women of Canaan; the pomp and gaiety of their festivals; the voluptuousness of their impure rites: the hope of gratifying their curiosity for prying into futurity, by idolatrous divinations; the overpowering fears impressed on their souls by idolatrous superstition; their anxiety to conciliate the favour of those divinities, who were represented to them as the peculiar guardian gods of the country which they were newly settled in; these and other similar motives, adapted, if I may so apeak, to childish understandings, childish feelings, and childish appetites, demanded an immediate and strict discipline to counteract their influence, and preserve, amidst this backsliding and unstable people, the main principles of religion and morality, notwithstanding their continual propensity to corrupt the purity of both. And we evidently perceive, that the system of divine government exercised over the Jews, under their judges, was exactly adapted to their situation and their moral character; for the sacred history relates,* that "the children of Israel dwelt "amongst the Canaanites, and took their daughters to be their "wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served "their gods, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. And the "anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he sold "them into the hands of their enemies, as the Lord had said, "and as he had sworn unto them: and they were greatly dis-"tressed. And when they cried unto the Lord, he raised up "judges; and then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered "them out of the hands of their enemies all the days of the "judge. And it came to pass when the judge was dead, that "they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their "fathers; and ceased not from their own doings, nor from "their stubborn way." That the government of the Israelites required this occasional interposition of God, in appointing the supreme magistrate, appears, as well from the tenor of the sacred history, as the testimony of Josephus,† who remarks, "That as they got large tributes from the Canaanites, and were "indisposed for taking pains, by their luxury, they suffered their

* Judges, ii, iii. † Joseph. Antiq. Book V. sect. vii.

"aristocracy to be corrupted also; and did not ordain them-"selves a senate, nor any other such magistrates as their laws "had formerly required." Here then either the Divinity must have *incessantly* interposed, never suffering a moment to pass without placing at the head of the Jews a vicegerent supported by all the terrors of the divine power, to restrain them forcibly from yielding to their idolatrous and vicious propensities, thus counteracting their whole moral character; a mode of procedure altogether unexampled in God's government, and indeed it should seem inconsistent with the very idea of a moral governor; or, he must altogether have abandoned them to the influence of those propensities, which would have speedily plunged them irretrievably in idolatry and vice with the rest of the world, and defeated the entire purpose of the divine economy; or, lastly, he must have taken that course which the sacred history declares he did, appointing *occasionally* vicegerents, as circumstances called for their interposition; and supporting the authority of his law, by thus visibly controlling the nation, and proportioning their prosperity and adversity to the degree of obedience which they voluntarily yielded to that law; and habituating them to look up immediately to his protection, without interposing any permanent human authority on which they might be too apt exclusively to depend, and thus forget their God.

Such was the system of divine administration over the Jews under their judges. Thus the chosen people, who were, as it should seem (like all the nations of that period) mere children in religion and morality, were treated as children, kept in a state of tutelage under the constant guardianship and occasional correction of their heavenly Father; taught to feel experimentally their total dependence upon his protection; taught to feel that none of their chiefs or elders possessed power or wisdom to govern and defend them, except as they were raised to the supreme authority, and maintained in it by God himself.

That this system was as effectual in securing the obedience of the Jews to the divine law, as from their situation and character we could reasonably expect, may appear, when we recollect, that of * four hundred and fifty years which

* It is not easy to be accurate in the statement of these periods of prosperity and good conduct, or adversity and punishment; because that some-

elapsed from the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan by Joshua, to the first election of a king in the person of Saul, when taken together, distinct from the intervals of occasional relapses into idolatry, above three hundred and fifty seem to have passed under the government of the various judges, whom God raised up at different periods, to recall his people from their errors, and retain them in the observance of his Law; and

times *part* of the children of Israel transgressed the divine Law, and were punished *distinct from the rest*. Thus it is recorded, Judges, x. 7, 8. "That "the Lord delivered Israel into the hands of the children of Ammon, and "they oppressed them eighteen years, all the children of Israel which were "on *the other side Jordan*, in the land of the Amorites." Something similar to this appears to have been the case in the deliverance wrought by Shamgar, Judges iii. 31; and even the servitude to Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges, iv. 2, does not appear to have been universal, though it is said he mightily oppressed the children of Israel; for it is said, "Deborah judged "Israel at that time." But the following periods appear to have been clearly periods of tranquillity, during which the Israelites lived under their own law.

From the time when Joshua took the whole land, and the land rested from war, Joshua, ch. xi. 23, about 1445 years before Christ, to the time when God delivered them into the hands of the king of Mesopotamia, about the year A. C. 1410 - - - - - - 35 years.

Judges, iii. 11	—the land had peace under Othniel - -	40 ditto.
——— iii. 30	—under Ehud and his successors - -	80 ditto.
——— v. 31	—under Deborah and Barak, and their successors - - - - -	40 ditto.
——— viii. 28	—under Gideon - - - - -	40 ditto.
——— x. 2	—under Tola - - - - -	23 ditto.
——— x. 3	—under Jair - - - - -	22 ditto.
——— xii. 7	—under Jephthah - - - -	7 ditto.
——— xii. 9	—under Ibzan - - - - -	7 ditto.
——— xii. 11	—under Elon - - - - -	10 ditto.
——— xii. 14	—under Abdon - - - - -	8 ditto.
Under Samuel, at least	- - - - -	25 ditto.
	Total - -	337

Without taking into the amount the forty years during which Eli had judged Israel, 1 Sam. iv. 18, during which the worship of the true God, and the observance of the law, had been in a great measure preserved, though not perfectly; this would make the period during which the law of Moses was the regular established religion of Israel, 377 years out of the 450 under the Judges; and it must be recollected, that it was always the religion of probably a great multitude of the people, though the public idolatry of others brought down the judgments of God: and above all, let it not be forgotten, that those idolaters did not renounce the worship of Jehovah, but only added to it the worship of idols. They corrupted, but never entirely forsook, their national religion; and such corruption never implied any *doubt* of its *divine original*, or any positive disbelief of the Mosaic miracles. If, with Usher in his Chronology, and others, we suppose the periods of tranquillity above to have been only *partial*, we must also admit the idolatries through the *entire* period of the Judges to have been also partial, and the argument will be unaffected.

that during the lives of each of these judges, there was no material apostacy from the national religion, and no material interruption of the public tranquillity and prosperity by these punishments, which always attended such apostacy. It is peculiarly necessary to notice this circumstance, because, by a superficial reader of the sacred history, the whole period under the judges may be easily mistaken as one uninterrupted series of idolatries and crimes; from his not observing that the lapses which incurred punishment, and the divine deliverances which attended repentance, are related so fully and distinctly as to occupy almost the entire narrative; while very long periods, when, under the government of their judges, "the people "followed God, and the land enjoyed peace," are passed over in a single verse, as productive of no occurrence which required a particular detail.

The situation of the Jewish nation, during the government of its judges seems calculated to promote the efficacy of that system of discipline under which it was placed, by the very circumstance which at first view appears most repugnant to it, the want of a close union and common interest between the different tribes. If, on the one side, this prevented them from regularly uniting under a common leader, except when such a one was pointed out by some clear manifestation of the divine will in his appointment, and divine aid in his support, and thus left them both as tribes and individuals, to do what was "*right in their own eyes*,"* without any immediate visible and regular control; this very circumstance on the other hand, enabled the Deity to exhibit more conspicuously the operation of that particular providence, which he had declared should distribute temporal prosperity and calamity according to the degree of obedience or disobedience to the Mosaic Law, which not only the people collectively, but each distinct tribe and family should manifest; and thus gradually imprint more deeply on the whole nation the necessity of obedience to the divine will, by examples within their immediate observance, and the full force of which they could distinctly comprehend. Now the exercise of such a particular providence over a numerous and widely-extended nation, where one supreme government from the very first had uniformly controuled the entire, and rendered each tribe and family less obviously the masters of their own conduct, must

* Judges, xvii. 6.

have been more gradual and extended in its operation, and less plainly discriminative and observable, than in the situation of the Jews under their judges. This circumstance, though not noticed (as far as I can recollect) by writers on this subject, appears to me to have been the most decided effect, and therefore to supply the most satisfactory explanation of this part of the divine economy: and be it observed, that this mode of exhibiting the particular providence of God in the distribution of temporal blessings, was the more necessary, as the Jewish people was the only one which acknowledged the authority of Jehovah, or expected any such administration of providence. All the surrounding nations looked up to their own idols as their guardian gods; and the general superiority of Jehovah over these had been sufficiently displayed in the circumstances attending the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, and their settlement in Canaan; but it was still requisite that it should be proved, that merely belonging to the chosen people, and acknowledging the general authority of Jehovah, would be insufficient to secure his protection, except to this was added an humble and vigilant obedience to that law which God had promulgated, and by the observance of which alone the purposes of the divine economy could be completely fulfilled.

That this plan was pursued under the judges, in distributing prosperity or calamity to the different tribes, according to their good or ill conduct, we have many instances. Thus we are told that * Judah and Simeon went to attack and dispossess the Canaanites who were remaining in the territory allotted for their inheritance; and that the Lord was with them, and gave their arms success as far as they continued their confidence in the divine aid. A similar observation is made with regard to the tribe of† Joseph; while ‡ five other tribes are enumerated, who, indulging their own indolence, or destitute of sufficient faith in the divine aid, would not drive out the Canaanites, but were satisfied with making them tributaries; and the subsequent history shows this was the cause of the severest calamities to these tribes: these nations soon became "thorns in their "sides,"§ the instruments of the divine chastisement, merited by this disobedience, and the subsequent idolatries to which it led.

* Judges, ch. i. nineteen first verses.
† Ibid. i. 22.
‡ Ibid. i. 21, 27, 29, 30, 33.
§ Ibid. ii. 3.

The history of the manner in which "God rendered the "wickedness of Abimelech which he did unto his father, in "slaying his seventy brethren: And all the evil of the men of "Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them "came the curse of Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal,"* supplies another striking instance of the administration of Providence here supposed. These and various other facts supply additional instances of the same administration of Providence: the apparent severity in some of these instances either arose from the operation of human passions in the agents employed or permitted to execute these judgments, without being miraculously controlled in their conduct; or if directly commanded, we may be well assured was indispensably necessary to effect the purposes of the divine economy, when even that degree of severity was not sufficient entirely to prevent subsequent offences. Indeed the objection so frequently, but so causelessly advanced, that the supposed divine government over the Jews was not as completely effectual as might naturally be expected, shews the divine interference was confined to cases of unquestioned necessity, and interrupted as little as possible the operation of the laws of nature, and the regular course of moral discipline, under which mankind is placed. We are entirely † *incompetent* judges *a priori* of the degree of interference which ought to have taken place under such a particular providence as God exercised over the Jews, as well as of the effects which ought to have been produced by it. The existence of such a system is proved by undeniable facts, and its effects have evidently been highly important; and this should satisfy our doubts, and excite our gratitude. To insist on more extensive discoveries of the reasons and process of the divine government is equally irrational and presumptuous.

As the object of these Lectures does not require, and their limits will not allow, a minute inquiry into the whole series of the Jewish history, and the discussion of every difficulty or objection which may appear to arise from it; I shall proceed to point out such *leading* circumstances in the progress of this dispensation, as may illustrate its general tendency to prevent the existence, or check the spread of those idolatries and apostacies, which form the subject of our present discussion.

* Judges, the entire ch. ix. particularly ver. 56 & 57.

† Vide Butler's Analogy, Part III. ch. iii. particularly p. 260.

The ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN JUDEA forms a distinguished era in the history of the chosen people. It has been already remarked, that this change has been * provided for in the divine economy, having been foretold, in the prophetic declaration of Moses delivered to the assembled nation shortly before his death, in such a manner as supplies a striking proof of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. It was not however established until above 400 years had elapsed, and then with circumstances deserving accurate attention, as they appear to illustrate strongly the character of the Jewish people, as well as the kind of discipline, and degree of control, which the divine wisdom thought fit to exercise over this chosen race.

It is related, that the elders of Israel came unto Samuel, and said unto him,† "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not "in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the "nations." This inconvenience arising from the misconduct of the sons of Samuel was so plainly temporary and easily removeable, that it could have been but a mere pretence. The real motive undoubtedly was, that they should be governed "like "all the other nations;" a motive originating in their not sufficiently attending to the divine interpositions of the judges, but yielding to their ardent and culpable fondness for the manners and customs of the surrounding idolatrous states: a fondness they were restrained from indulging, by the control of that theocracy established by the Mosaic Law; a control which they in all probability secretly hoped would be less strict if they changed the form of their civil government. This criminal disposition God exposes and reprobates: "They have not," says he to the Prophet, "rejected thee, but they have rejected me, "that I should not reign over them. According to all the "works which they have done since the day that I brought "them up out of Egypt unto this day wherewith they have "forsaken me, and served other gods; so do they also unto "thee."‡ Yet the Divinity would not exercise such a resistless control as totally to disregard the choice of his people, and chain down their free will: this would have been inconsistent with his character as a moral governor. He indeed commands the Pro-

* Deut. xvii. from ver. 14, compared with 1 Sam. viii. x. & xii.
† 1 Sam. viii. 5. ‡ 1 Sam. viii. 7 & 8.

phet solemnly to protest unto them, declaring unto them his condemnation of their criminal desires, and warning them of the various* inconveniencies which should attend the kingly government; yet on their persisting in their demand, for "the "people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be "like all the other nations; and that our king may judge us, "and go out before us, and fight our battles;"† the Prophet is commanded "to hearken to their voice, and set a king over "them." But the mode in which this is done is peculiarly remarkable; the people retain such reverence for their God, and such confidence in their Prophet, that they do not attempt to elect a king themselves, but wait for the divine appointment. In this appointment care is taken to preserve in its full force that theocracy originally established over the Jews.‡ A king is elected by the express declaration of the divine oracle; raised from an obscure family,§ so that he himself, as well as the entire nation, should know and feel that he derived his authority solely from that appointment. || The rules and forms of the regal government are prescribed by the Prophet, which proves that the executive power alone was confided to this vicegerent of Jehovah, who still reserved to himself all legislative authority. Nor is the solemn inauguration of the new monarch completed until God by a miracle had convinced the people of his displeasure at the criminal motives in which their demand of a king had originated; and thus filled them with terror, humbled them to repentance, and led them to confess their crime, and implore pardon and a continuance of the divine protection.¶ "Now therefore stand and see," says the Prophet, "this great "thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not "wheat harvest to-day? I will call upon the Lord, and he shall "send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that "your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of "the Lord, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the "Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all

* 1 Sam. viii. ver. 10 to the end.

† Ib. ver. 19 & 20.

‡ Vide Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. iii. who, in opposition to Le Clerc and others, has (as appears to me) clearly established, that the theocracy was continued under the kings, and even to the appearance of our Saviour. Vol. IV. p. 225.

§ 1 Sam. ix. 21. || Ibid. x. 23. ¶ 1 Sam. xii. 16. to the end.

"the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the "people said unto Samuel, pray for thy servants unto the Lord "thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our "sins this evil to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the "people, Fear not; ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn "not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all "your heart; and turn ye not aside: for then should ye go "after vain things which cannot profit; for they are vain. "For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's "sake: for it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people. "Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the "Lord, in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the "good and the right way. Only fear the Lord, and serve him "in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he "hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall "be consumed, both ye and your king."

How clearly does this transaction, in all its circumstances, illustrate the nature of that government which God exercised over his chosen people, and prove how admirably it was adapted to their situation and character! It exhibits, not the overwhelming violence of resistless power, but the steady yet mild control of parental authority, correcting the transgressions of this wayward race with a necessary strictness, and enforcing their submission with immovable firmness; yet attentive to their feelings, indulgent even to their weaknesses, ever ready to hear their supplications, and accept their penitence; and incessantly directing every circumstance so as most effectually to provide for their improvement and their happiness. While in the people we perceive a puerile turn of mind, easily caught by outward show, and breaking* forth into tumultuous applause at beholding the stature and beauty of their new sovereign; anxious to imitate their neighbours in the splendor of a court, and placing their dependence more on the warlike character of their leader, than the experienced protection of their God; yet rather weak and inconstant in their moral and religious character, than obstinately impious and depraved: in the ordinary course of things inattentive to the guardian hand of Providence, but never questioning the divine original of their religion and government, or deliberately rejecting the authority of their heavenly King. On the contrary, when their reflection

* 1 Sam. x. 23, 24.

is roused, and their seriousness awakened by a sensible proof of the divine displeasure * they, as it should seem, humbly confess and deeply lament their transgressions; acknowledge gratefully the past mercies of their God, deprecate his wrath with heartfelt terror, and engage for their own future obedience, with evident sincerity. Such appears the real character of the Jewish people; such the nature of that discipline, and the degree of that control, which the wisdom of God exercised over them, as sufficient for securing the great objects of the divine dispensations.

Now it seems undeniable, that the various idolatries and transgressions of the Jews, not only naturally resulted from this their national character, but that they are perfectly consistent with the reality of such a divine government, and therefore in no degree diminish the credibility of those miracles, by which the existence of that government is attested; or the divine original of that Law, which was by its authority promulgated and upheld.

It has been already remarked, that the authenticity of the Pentateuch, and, by consequence, the certainty of the Mosaic miracles, and the divine original of the Mosaic Law, derives considerable evidence from the late introduction of the regal form of government in Judea. In truth, had this been established by their legislator from the first, it would have been difficult to remove the suspicion, that temporal motives and political arts might have contributed to give a fictitious divine authority to a code of laws, which an able legislator had contrived, and a series of powerful kings had maintained, as the support of the regal government; while in the present case all such suspicion is precluded, as the Law must have been universally recognized before the establishment of that regal authority, which, though it in a certain degree provides for, it yet disapproves of and restrains. It was not, therefore, unproductive of advantage to the permanent interests of religion, that this great change was delayed by Providence until the Mosaic Law had subsisted long enough to prove that its first establishment had not originated in any human policy, and that its subsequent support was independent of any human power: and it has, I trust, appeared, that every circumstance attending this transaction is not only consistent with the original establishment of the Jewish scheme by divine power, but confirms the con-

* 1 Sam. xi. 15, with xii. 4. & 19.

tinued interposition of Providence in its superintendence and support.

The next leading event of the Jewish history, which, in this view of our subject, it is necessary to consider, is the* SEPARATION OF THE TEN TRIBES from the house of David, and their establishment in a separate kingdom by Jeroboam; an event which at first view may appear to indicate a total contempt of the Mosaic Law, since it was attended with a deplorable schism, and idolatrous corruption in the Jewish church; a corruption which, as it was supported by worldly policy in the monarchs, and by the propensity to self-indulgence and idolatry in the mass of the people, was unhappily permanent; for every king of Israel, however praiseworthy in other respects, adhered to the sin of "Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin." A close attention to the circumstances and effects of this event, will however shew, that it is perfectly consistent with the reality of that divine superintendence which directed the Jewish dispensation.

The† origin of this separation is declared to have been a divine judgment on the house of David, in consequence of the idolatrous worship introduced by the foreign wives of Solomon, and criminally permitted or partaken of by that prince. We are however completely certain, that Solomon long worshipped the true God, revered the Law of Moses as divine, and is one of the most clear and impressive teachers of religious truth and moral duty that ever enlightened mankind: yet in the decline of life and of reason, excessive sensuality, inflamed by the long enjoyment of royal power and uninterrupted prosperity, lulled to sleep the vigilance of his piety, and betrayed him into guilt. Says the sacred historian,‡ "He loved many strange women, "of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the Chil- "dren of Israel, Ye shall not go in unto them, neither shall "they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your "heart after their gods: but Solomon clave unto these in love. "And it came to pass, that when Solomon was old, his wives "turned away his heart after other gods." It is a melancholy but certain truth, such is the weakness and corruption of human nature, that this narrative is perfectly natural and credible; and surely the crimes and idolatries of the Jewish nation in

* Vide 1 Kings xi. xii. & xiii; and 2 Chron. x. & xi.

† Vide 1 Kings xi. ‡ Ib. ver. 1 to 13.

general were not more incredible or unnatural, on the supposition of their general sincere acknowledgment of the divine origin of their Law, than the similar misconduct of this enlightened and favoured monarch. Certainly no instance can shew more clearly the general futility of this objection. But let us pursue the history. Had this offence remained unpunished, so contagious an example would probably have infected the *whole mass* of the people, which would thus have irretrievably sunk into idolatry and vice: and does it not appear probable, that so *long as the whole nation continued united under one sovereign*, this *danger might frequently recur*? Does not therefore this division of the people under *two* monarchs appear, even to our short-sighted views, not only a just punishment for the crimes of Solomon, but the most probable method of preventing that *universal* apostacy, from similar misconduct in future, which might have entirely defeated the design of the Jewish dispensation? And the more accurately we consider the circumstances and effects of this revolution, the more clearly shall we perceive, that the prevention of such a total apostacy was the chief cause why it was permitted, nay, even forwarded, by a divine interference.

When the prophet * Ahijah was commissioned to announce to Jeroboam his selection by God as sovereign of the ten tribes, he declares in the clearest terms that this was designed as a punishment for the idolatries of Solomon; that it was intended to reserve one tribe for the house of David, in reward of his unshaken adherence to the worship of his God; and that a similar adherence on the part of Jeroboam was the condition on which his kingdom should be secured to him. Thus, in its first origin, this revolution was a providential dispensation. But yet it was not brought about by any resistless operation of divine power; human passions and human agency were, in appearance, its only effective cause. The † imprudent and tyrannic answer of Rehoboam to the demands of the Jewish people for a redress of grievances, at the commencement of his reign, was its immediate occasion: but when the king of Judah made preparations to reduce the revolted tribes, the Divinity interposed to prevent the miseries of civil war, in opposition to a measure originating in his decree, and authorized by his prophet: ‡ "Ye shall not go

* 1 Kings ix. 33.
† Ibid. xii. first fifteen verses. ‡ Ibid. xii. 24.

"up, nor fight against your brethren; for this thing is from "me."

Thus every circumstance attending this revolution had a most direct and powerful tendency to excite in both these kings, and their subjects, a *spirit of pious emulation* in their obedience to the divine law. But with an impious policy, Jeroboam, forgetting the divine promise, looked only to worldly means for securing his power, and * afraid lest his subjects, if they attended the temple-worship at Jerusalem, where the house of David reigned, should be tempted to submit again to their ancient sovereigns, set up idolatrous symbols of the divine presence in two places of his own dominions, and ordained priests who were not of the tribe of Levi, and celebrated religious festivals to counteract the attraction of the feasts at the temple. This conduct, however, though it proves a most criminal inattention to the injunctions of the Mosaic Law, yet it implies no deliberate disbelief of its divine original, or rejection of its authority, in either the monarch or the people: on the contrary, the conduct of Jeroboam bears (as has been already noticed) the strongest attestation to the universal notoriety and established authority of that Law. Apprehensive as he was lest the observance of its ritual should alienate his subjects, and endanger his crown, he yet attempts not to dispute its authority, or discredit its rites; he merely introduces an innovation as to the *place* where these rites were to be observed, and the *persons* by whom they were to be performed: he endeavours to captivate a people addicted to idolatrous emblems, by introducing the same symbols of the divine presence which the Jews had compelled Aaron to set up, and which he himself had been familiarized to in Egypt: he yet declares them the symbols of that Divinity who had delivered the nation from Egypt, and thus recognises the reality of that divine interposition on which the Mosaic Law was founded. "Behold," says he, "thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee "up out of the land of Egypt:" and still more, he appoints a feast similar to the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, which solemnly recognised the abode of the Jews in the wilderness, and all the miracles which attended it.

Such was the nature and extent of that schism and corruption introduced by Jeroboam, dictated by the policy of the monarch,

* 1 Kings xii. from 25 to the end.

and adapted to the idolatrous propensities of his subjects, but not at all indicating any disbelief of the Mosaic history, or the divine original of the Mosaic Law; on the contrary, evidently admitting both. But this, it will be said, was a strange inconsistency; true—but yet it is an inconsistency by no means incredible or unnatural. The history of Christianity, confirmed by our own experience, may teach us, that a departure from the pure simplicity of a religion derived from an acknowledged revelation, may be introduced by policy, recommended by idolatrous corruptions to an unreflecting multitude, and subsist for ages; while, at the same time, nothing is farther from the ideas of that multitude, than any disbelief or rejection of the original revelation itself.

Nor ought it to be forgotten, that this schism and idolatry of the ten tribes gave occasion for the most signal displays of divine power, and the most emphatic denunciations and manifestations of divine justice, in the correction and government of this perverse race and their guilty monarchs. The miraculous reproof and punishment of * Jeroboam himself; the death of his † favorite son: the utter destruction of the three royal houses of ‡ Jeroboam, of § Baasha, and of ‖ Ahab—all foretold by the prophets; afforded awful examples of the divine vengeance. There also were exhibited the miracles of ¶ Elijah and Elisha; and concerning the kings and people of the ten tribes, were pronounced some of the most distinguished prophecies of ** Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. And finally, after a series of instructions and chastisements, which illustrated the spirit of the divine Law, manifested the perpetual control of Divine Providence, and verified all the denunciations of their inspired Lawgiver: but which, though doubtless operative on many individuals, could not reform either the sovereigns or the great mass of the people; God executed judgment on this deluded and corrupted race, for "he removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his "servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their

* Vide 1 Kings xiii. † Ibid. xiv.

‡ Compare 1 Kings xiv. 10, with xv. 29. § Ibid. xvi. 11.

‖ 1 Kings xxi. from 20 to 22; and 2 Kings ix. and x.

¶ Vide 1 Kings, from xvii. to the end of the book; and 2 Kings, ch. i. to vii. and ch. xiii.

** Vide Isaiah i. viii. and ix. 18; xvii. and xxviii.; Hosea passim, particularly viii. ix. x. and xiii. 15, to the end.

"own land to Assyria; there was none left but the tribe of "Judah only."*

If, from the *effects* of this revolution on the *ten* tribes, we direct our reflections to its corresponding *effects* on the *remaining two*, we shall, I think, perceive, that it was the most powerful means of *preserving* in *them* whatever *degree of attention* to *the divine Law subsisted amongst them*, and preventing that universal idolatry and corruption in the entire Jewish nation, which would, to all appearance, have defeated the great purposes of the divine economy. This event rendered it the obvious political interest of the kings of Judah to adhere with strictness to the Mosaic Law, and promote its observance amongst their subjects, to the utmost of their power. Thus to act, became the boasted distinction of these kings, and the popular topic by which they maintained their superiority over the kings of Israel. Thus, when Abijah, the grandson of Solomon, was preparing to engage with Jeroboam the first monarch of the ten tribes, this is the topic he selects to rouse the ardour of his own soldiers, and depress his adversary, whom he reproaches not only with his revolt, but his idolatry and impiety, in casting out the priests of the Lord the sons of Aaron, and with setting up the golden calves, which Jeroboam made for gods. † "But as for us," says he, "the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; "and the priests which minister unto the Lord are the sons of "Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: for we keep "the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him. "And behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his "priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O "house of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord, the God of "your fathers; for ye shall not prosper." The event justified the pious confidence of the young monarch, notwithstanding the superior generalship of Jeroboam, who had placed an ambush behind Judah; and notwithstanding the troops of Israel were 800,000, those of Judah but 400,000, (the entire force of both nations being brought forward on this occasion, which rendered this providential dispensation more decisive) so that "when Ju- "dah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind; "yet when they cried unto the Lord, it came to pass, that God

* Vide 2 Kings xvii. particularly from 18 to 23.

† 2 Chronicles xiii. from 4 to the end.

"smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. And "there fell of Israel 500,000 chosen men. Thus the children "of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the Lord God of "their fathers." This awful instance of divine vengeance must have operated as a powerful encouragement to the inhabitants of Judah to persevere in the pure worship of the true God, and to the reflecting part of Israel to reform.

In truth, this national separation formed, almost from the moment it began, a broad line of distinction between those who suffered themselves, from idolatrous propensities, or worldly views, to be seduced from the observance of the divine Law, and those determined conscientiously to adhere to it. At its very commencement, not only the Levites, * "whom Jeroboam "cast out of the priests' office, left their suburbs and their pos- "sessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem; but after them, "out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek "the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the "Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom "of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong." It is true, this strict observance of the divine Law was not permanent even in Judah. Rehoboam, corrupted by prosperity, fell into the same crimes as his father Solomon; but when chastised by the invasion of the king of Egypt, and roused to reflection by the warning of a prophet, the "princes and the king "humbled themselves; and they said, the Lord is righteous:" on their repentance they were preserved from ruin.† The son and successor of Rehoboam gained the decisive victory above related over the revolted and idolatrous tribes—an event which appears to have made the deepest impression on the people of Judah; for immediately after, his son ‡ Asa succeeding to that throne, displayed the most pious zeal in the service of Jehovah, removing his mother from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove, and entering into a solemn covenant with his whole assembled nation, § "to seek the Lord God of Israel "with all their heart, and with all their soul; and that whoso- "ever would not do so should be put to death. And all Judah "rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart,

* 2 Chronicles xi. from 13 to 17.
† 2 Chronicles xii. 5, 6, 7.
‡ Ibid. xiv. xv. and xvi.
§ Ibid. xv. particularly 9 to 15.

" and sought him with their whole desire, and he was found of " them: and the Lord gave them rest round about." And not only had all Judah and Benjamin joined in the covenant, but " the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh and " Simeon; for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, " when they saw that the Lord his God was with him."

Another instance, where the piety of Judah was exerted to recal the Israelites to their duty, occurred in the reign of Hezekiah, which has been already noticed. * But as it is not my intention to do more than give a general view of the providential government over the Jewish nation, in order to effect the purposes of the Mosaic economy, it is sufficient here to recollect what has before been noticed, how strongly the recognition of the Mosaic Law in these divided kingdoms establishes its authenticity; and to remark, that from the solemn covenant with God formed by Asa, the majority of the kings of Judah were pious and exemplary, particularly so long as they avoided any close connexion with the monarchs of Israel, the † affinity formed by Jehoshaphat with the depraved family of Ahab appearing to be the first occasion, after this event, of introducing idolatry and vice into the royal house of Judah.

In process of time, these corruptions extended, and, notwithstanding the various chastisements by which they were checked, required at length the severe discipline of seventy years captivity in Babylon, completely to subdue the idolatrous propensities of the Jews, and convince them of the guilt and danger of associating any other god with the supreme majesty of Jehovah, to whom ever since that period they have paid exclusive adoration, and have, notwithstanding a series of unexampled calamities and trials, observed the Mosaic Law, as of unquestioned authority and divine original.

Another opportunity will occur for tracing out the various steps by which Divine Providence, under this and every other part of the Jewish dispensation, advanced the interests of true religion, and prepared the way for the Gospel of Christ: enough, I trust, has now been said, to shew that the idolatries and transgressions of the Jewish nation, far from proving that their religion and government were not of divine original, or conducted by any providential control, evince the contrary; and evidently

* 2 Chronicles xxx. 1 to 5. † 2 Chron. xviii. 1. and xxi. 6.

appear to have proceeded from causes perfectly consistent with the divine promulgation of the Mosaic Law, and whose influence must have produced a total and irremediable apostasy from true religion in the whole Jewish race, if it had not been perpetually counteracted by that Providence, which, without violating the analogy of nature, or infringing on the freedom and moral accountableness of man, yet directs the whole series of events so as to accomplish its own all-gracious purposes, out of evil bringing forth good, and perpetually advancing the cause of truth and righteousness.

I shall conclude this Lecture with some observations suggested by the subjects we have been now discussing. Let me then warn my readers against adopting a preconception, very injurious to the cause of religion with unthinking minds, even that all the individuals whom God made use of as instruments for the deliverance of his people, are brought forward to our notice in Scripture as worthy of divine favor, and fit models for our imitation in the *entire* tenor of their lives. They generally indeed possessed the important and praiseworthy qualities of zeal and intrepidity in defence of their national religion and constitution, and were active and effective instruments in restoring the worship of Jehovah; and thus in the main forwarding the interests of virtue and religion. Hence, God frequently assisted their efforts with miraculous aid, or is said to have raised them up,* or been with them as judges or kings of Israel. But we must by no means conceive that this implies, that the divine approbation attended *all* their conduct. The

* Most of the difficulties and objections which appear to discredit the divine original of the Jewish revelation, are derived from the misconduct of the nation in general, or from the errors and crimes of some distinguished individuals, who were employed as instruments to forward the progress of the divine economy. In addition to such circumstances as have been advanced in this and the preceding Lectures, to obviate such difficulties and objections, the following remarks may perhaps not be useless:

It is said to be utterly incredible, that persons raised up, aided, inspired, directed or assisted by God, should have been guilty of such crimes as David; such idolatries as Solomon; such weaknesses as Samson; such apostasies and cruelties as the Jews. To this it may be answered, that it is perfectly credible they should be raised up for *particular* purposes; aided in effecting a particular object; inspired with a certain degree of knowledge; assisted at particular periods, and in a special manner; and yet, that *beyond* this, their natural character, their external temptations, their acquired habits, may have produced all the irregularities and crimes which gave so much offence. To ask, why God did not *prevent* this? is to ask, why he did not exercise a *greater* degree of supernatural control than the peculiar purposes of Providence required? A question as absurd as it is presump-

excesses of Samson, the rash vow of Jephthah, the ephod of Gideon, which proved a snare unto him and all his house, involving them in the guilt of idolatry; the excessive indulgence of Eli to his profligate sons; the manner in which the

tuous. On this subject, I transcribe the observations of Butler, Analogy, p. 260, which appear to me decisive. Having illustrated, by a variety of examples, that the system of nature is liable to objections, "*a priori*," analogous to those advanced against the scheme of revelation; and that as the former are admitted to be inconclusive objections to natural religion, the latter are equally so with regard to revelation; he proceeds, "By applying "these general observations to a particular objection, it will be more dis- "tinctly seen, how they are applicable to others of the like kind: and "indeed to almost all objections against Christianity, as distinguished from "objections against its evidence. It appears from Scripture, that as it was "not unusual in the apostolic age, for persons, upon their conversion to Chris- "tianity, to be endued with miraculous gifts; so, some of those persons "exercised these gifts in a strangely irregular and disorderly manner; and "this is made an objection against their being really miraculous. Now the "foregoing observations quite remove this objection, how considerable "soever it may appear at first sight. For, consider a person endued with "any of these gifts; for instance, that of tongues: it is to be supposed, "that he had the same power over this miraculous gift, as he would have "had over it, had it been the effect of habit, of study and use, as it ordi- "narily is; or the same power over it, as he had over any other natural "endowment. Consequently, he would use it in the same manner he did "any other; either regularly and upon proper occasions only, or irregularly "and improper ones: according to his sense of decency, and his character of "prudence. Where then is the objection? Why, if this miraculous "power was indeed given to the world, to propagate Christianity and attest "the truth of it, we might, it seems, have expected, that other sort of "persons should have been chosen to be invested with it; or that these "should, at the same time, have been endued with prudence; or that they "should have been continually restrained and directed in the exercise of it: "i. e. that God should have miraculously interposed, if at all, in a different "manner or higher degree. But from the observations made above, it is undeni- "ably evident, that *we are not judges*, in what degrees and manners, it were "to have been expected, he should miraculously interpose; upon supposi- "tion of his doing it in some degree and manner. Nor, in the natural "course of Providence, are superior gifts of memory, eloquence, know- "ledge, and other talents of great influence, conferred only on persons of "prudence and decency, or such as are disposed to make the properest use "of them. Nor is the instruction and admonition naturally afforded us for "the conduct of life, particularly in our education, commonly given in a "manner the most suited to recommend it; but often with circumstances "apt to prejudice us against such instruction."

Such are the observations of Butler; and they seem to show most clearly, the unreasonableness of disbelieving the reality of the divine interpositions in the Jewish scheme, merely from the crimes and idolatries of the nation at large, or of the most remarkable persons employed in those interpositions. God raised up various judges, and kings and prophets, to deliver, to instruct, and to govern his people; and he gave them such aids of valour, prudence, knowledge, and such a degree of success, as were sufficient for the purposes they were necessarily to answer. But he did not make them, or the nation at large, *infallible* or *impeccable*: the judges often fell into errors and crimes; Samson abused his supernatural strength; David's piety and virtue were overpowered by criminal desire acquiring an

sons of Samuel himself abused their pious parent's authority; the crimes even of David and Solomon; all these facts supply abundant proofs, that as in the people, so in the chiefs, there was a mixture of weakness and unsteadiness, an immaturity of

undue ascendancy; Solomon, notwithstanding his extraordinary wisdom, was corrupted by sensuality, and fell into idolatry; and thus of the rest. But does this render it incredible that they were at all employed by God to effect his purposes, or on particular occasions assisted with extraordinary aid? Assuredly not. This would be to affirm that God could not interpose at all in human affairs, without interposing to such a degree, as would totally subvert the laws of man's moral nature, and the principles of his own moral government, by forcibly controlling human agency, and subverting all free will. The unreasonableness of supposing or expecting that the Deity should interpose to such a degree as this, is strongly and beautifully illustrated by archbishop King, in his celebrated Treatise on the Origin of Evil; and his observations are applied to the subject before us, by his learned and ingenious annotator, bishop Law. I shall insert a short extract from each; vide King's Origin of Evil, translated by Law, ch. v. sect. v. Subsect. III. p. 359. "Such an interruption as this," (viz. God's restraining all exercises of free will, when they tend to vice and absurdity; vide the two preceding paragraphs, particularly p. 356.) "would not only do violence "to nature, but quite invert the method of treating free agents. This "method is, to hinder or excite elections by rewards or punishments, to "divert them from unreasonable or absurd things, and draw them to better "by the persuasion of reason. But it is doubtful whether the nature of "the thing will permit an election to be determined by *impulse*, or as it were "by immediate contact, for it seems equally absurd to attempt a change of "election by any other means than those above mentioned, as to desire to "stop the motion of matter by intreaty or offering rewards. May we not "with the same reason expect that matter should be removed by rewards "and punishments, as the will influenced by physical impulse, as they call it? "for it is by these means they would have God to stop or alter the choice. "So preposterous an interposal would confound every thing, and leave "nothing certain in nature. How fatal such an experiment would be, and "how it would affect the minds of the observers; or what suspicions con-"cerning God and their own security, it might suggest to the whole system "of thinking beings, God only knows. We see that human laws cannot "be dispensed with, without very many inconveniencies, which yet, as they "are made upon an imperfect foresight, and can provide for few cases, seem "naturally to require some interposition. How much greater evils may "we apprehend from a dispensation with the divine, the natural laws, on "the observance of which the good of the whole depends. This seems to "be the reason why God makes use of so much labor and pains, so great an "apparatus of means, so many precepts, persuasions, and even entreaties for "the amendment of mankind, which nevertheless he could effect in a mo-"ment, if he were pleased to apply force; and, he would undoubtedly do it, "if he had not foreseen more inconveniencies from a change in the order of "nature, and violence done to elections." On the preceding paragraph his Annotator very truly remarks, "The *history* of the *Jewish nation* affords "good instances of this: what an apparatus of outward means was conti-"nually made use of in the government of that stiff-necked people! What "frequent murmurings, rebellions and apostasies were permitted and then "punished! What numerous miracles, both of the remunerative and vin-"dictive kind, were applied, in order to bring them to some tolerable sense "of their dependence on God, and suitable practice of the duties resulting "from it! All which would have been unnecessary at least, if one miracle

intellect, and dulness of sentiment as to morality and religion, which, though controlled and overruled by Providence, so as to prevent them from defeating the great objects of the divine dispensations, which these individuals were otherwise qualified to

"exerted on their minds could have done the business; if their understand-
"ings could as well have been illuminated, and their wills reformed at once;
"and if their practice produced by this means, and, as it were, *extorted* from
"*them*, would have been equally agreeable to the Deity. And in this, as
"well as many other respects, they seem to have been types and representa-
"tives of all mankind."

Archbishop King's idea of the nature of God's moral government, in Subsect. v. of the same Chapter, seems to me so just, and to cast so much light on many facts and arguments considered in this Work, I cannot forbear transcribing it. "As it would be prejudicial to man, to all nature, for "God to hinder bad elections by his absolute power, so nothing can be "conceived so disagreeable to himself. We have said, that God made the "world, in order to have something whereon to exercise his attributes "externally. But since he has several attributes, he cannot exercise them "*all* in *every thing* alike: his power, therefore, exerts itself chiefly in one "thing, his wisdom and goodness in another. He exercised his power in "creating the world and putting it into motion; his goodness and wisdom "in the order and agreement of things. But the Divine Wisdom seems to "have set apart the government of free agents as its peculiar province; "herein it fully exercises itself, and acts up to its infinity: for if it were finite, "it would not be equal to so great a task. It does not seem a very extra-"ordinary thing for God to be able to govern and absolutely direct such "beings as are merely passive, and deprived of all motion of their own, "whereby they might make resistance; for those things obey easily which "do not move but when they are moved, neither is there need of infinite "wisdom to govern them; for infinite power with a moderate use of "wisdom would have been sufficient. That there might be a subject, there-"fore, whereon the infinite wisdom of God should display itself, he created "free agents; which being as it were put out of his power and left to "themselves, might act in a manner independent of his will. It is evident "to any person, how much more difficult it is, and how much greater exer-"cise of wisdom it requires, to direct a multitude of these to a certain end, "and make them conspire to the common good; than to order brute beasts, "and such as have no power of themselves, in what manner you please. "To them that consider the vast multitude of free agents, which is almost "infinite, and their independence (since every one is, at least in many cases, "absolute master of his own actions, and is permitted by God to act accord-"ing to that liberty) God seems to have given a specimen of the extent of "his wisdom, which is able thus certainly and effectually to bring to the "end proposed so many free spirits, so many agents that were in a manner "set at liberty from his dominion, and committed every one to his own "government. Here is the proper place for wisdom, wherein, setting aside "and in a manner suspending the exercise of his power, he attains his ends "by prudence only, by mere dexterity of acting; and brings it to pass, that "so many jarring wills, depending on themselves alone, and no more in-"clined to either side by the divine Power, than if there were no such "thing, shall yet conspire together to promote the good of the universe."

Colliber's opinion, as quoted by Law, shall close this already too long note, for which the importance of the subject will, it is hoped, apologize. "It "was highly suitable," (says this judicious writer) "to the Divine Wisdom, "in the government of the world, both to pre-ordain some of the principal "events, with relation to the entire human community, or to the more con-

promote, yet should always prevent us from considering them as held forth by Scripture as in every instance of their conduct favored of God and to be imitated by man. In general, indeed, this * is expressly noted in the Scripture itself, and an immediate punishment declared to be inflicted for their offences: where it is not, we are undoubtedly called on to compare their conduct with the PERFECT MODEL of our LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and by this comparison judge how far they are worthy of our imitation; adopting the sentiment of the Apostle, who declared, † "For such an High Priest became us, who "is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made "higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those "high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and "then for the people: for this he did once, when he offered up "himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have

"siderable parts of it, and to reserve to himself a right of interposing, and "influencing particular agents; as in other cases, so more especially in order "to the accomplishment of these events. That he has actually done so, is "abundantly evident from Scripture prophecies and histories; and that in "so doing he has acted in a manner most worthy his wisdom, is no less "manifest. For hereby it appears, that the divine government is equally "opposed to chance and destiny. Had the Deity taken no care of futurity, "but left every man to the conduct of his own inclination, and natural "effects in general to the influence of their causes, without *ever interposing* "to *direct* them to the attainment of his great design, this would have been "almost in effect to divest himself of the government of rational agents, "and to subject their affairs to chance, and to the hazard of the utmost dis-"order and confusion; or had he, on the contrary, absolutely or fatally "*determined every event*, though this would have been far enough from "divesting himself of the government of the world, yet it would have been "a government unworthy of the Deity; a government entirely exclusive of "all proper sin and punishment, virtue and reward; wherein he himself "would have been in effect the *only* agent, and all the creatures stupid and "*passive*; whereas, by pre-ordaining the more material events, and suffering "the creatures freely to exert their faculties in all convenient cases, he ap-"pears most wisely to have chosen the middle way, and thereby to have "equally avoided the mischiefs of both extremes."

For more on this difficult subject, I refer to King's Work at large, to which, as far as appears to me, no adequate answer has been given. I would also entreat the inquiring reader to consider what has been advanced by Butler, in his Analogy, Part. I. ch. iii. *Of the moral government of God;* ch. vi. *Of the opinion of necessity, as influencing practice;* and ch. vii. *Of the government of God, as being imperfectly comprehended;* as well as ch. v. *Of a state of moral discipline.* He would soon be convinced how *idly* ignorant and superficial sceptics *object* to what God *has* done; from their wild theories as to what, in their opinions, he *might, should* or *could* have done.

* This is remarkably conspicuous in the cases of Samson and Eli, David and Solomon.

† Heb. vii. 26, 28.

"infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, "maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

I shall here close these remarks, by entreating my younger readers, that in considering this as well as every succeeding part of the Jewish dispensation, they may recollect, that the effects arising from it were at no one period so *complete* and extensive, as to justify us in supposing the state of things at that period was that on which Providence rested as perfect and final. No, it was still a *system* in *progress*. To this hour the Jewish scheme is yet in *progress*: important as are the effects it has already produced, the singular situation of this people at this moment, outcasts, as they appear to be, from the kingdom of Christ, when compared with the prophetic declaration of their future conversion, after the "fulness of the Gentiles shall have "come in,"* must convince us we cannot yet fathom the counsels of God, in the entire series of the divine economy. Yet we perceive its perpetual tendency, sometimes to produce in the whole mass of the Jewish nation, an increasing sense of virtue and religion, by counteracting their prejudices and errors, and punishing their crimes and apostasies; sometimes leading a chosen few within the bosom of this nation, to far higher attainments in piety, and making them the instruments of impressing religious instruction, and religious sentiments, not so much on their immediate countrymen, as on remote nations in remote ages; thus at a great distance preparing the way for the Christian scheme.

Finally let it be recollected, that the design of the Jewish economy was not solely or chiefly to preserve the *Jews themselves* in perfect separation from the surrounding nations, and in perfect obedience to the divine law; so that where this effect was not fully produced, it should be supposed to have *failed* in accomplishing its *purpose*: No, the GREAT OBJECT of this dispensation was, to preserve in the world a STANDING MONUMENT AND A STANDING PROOF OF THE UNITY, THE SUPREMACY, AND THE PROVIDENCE OF JEHOVAH: and this effect was *perpetually* and *uniformly* produced in all the periods and by all the events of the Jewish history. Whether the Jews were obedient and prosperous, or idolatrous and depressed, in their apostasies and captivities, as well as their repentance and

* Rom. xi. 25.

restorations, the power and providence of Jehovah were equally conspicuous; and, so far as concerned the great bulk of mankind, the interests of religion equally promoted and secured, and that providential dispensation successfully conducted, which was necessary to prepare for and introduce the GOSPEL of CHRIST.

LECTURE III.

SANCTIONS OF THE JEWISH LAW.

SECT. I.—*Objections against the Mosaic Law, from its employing temporal sanctions—and visiting the iniquities of the fathers on the children—Warburton's opinion on this subject—his Work incomplete—his reasoning not perfectly conclusive—how far I agree with, and how far I differ from, his opinion—Two conclusions seem true: first, that Moses employed temporal sanctions in his Law: second, the history of the Old Testament shews he believed a future state, and contains a gradual development of it—Moses employs temporal sanctions, both nationally and individually—This accounted for—from the nature of the Jewish theocracy—Reality of the extraordinary providence exercised over the Jews proved in this Work, without resorting to Warburton's medium—Temporal sanctions sufficient—necessary to confute idolatry—adapted to the intellectual and moral character of the Jews—best mode of introducing the doctrine of a future state with effect—a necessary part of the theocracy—exemplified to man the principles of God's moral government.*

DEUTERONOMY, XXX. 15, 16.

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this "day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his sta- "tutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless "thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

IN reviewing the system of religion and policy established by the Jewish Lawgiver, two circumstances claim particular attention: *one*, that the rewards and punishments of a future life *were not* inculcated by Moses as *sanctions* of his laws; and the *other*, that he *has* employed as a sanction the declaration, that "God would visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, "to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him; "and shew mercy unto the thousandth generation of them who "should love him, and keep his commandments."*

Both these circumstances have been the subject of long and warm discussion. The former has been objected to as an omission of necessary truth, which no genuine revelation could

* Exod. xx. 5, 6.

overlook; and the latter has been represented as a violation of natural justice, which God cannot be supposed to perpetrate or authorise.* While, on the other side, the defenders of revelation contend, that both these circumstances naturally arise from the peculiar character and views of the Jewish law, and are closely connected with the reality of that extraordinary providence by which the Jewish scheme was introduced and supported; and therefore, far from being inconsistent with the divine original of that system, they, on the contrary, illustrate and confirm it.

On this subject the celebrated Warburton has peculiarly distinguished himself: to do him justice, I shall state his argument in his own words.† "In reading the law and history of "the Jews, with all the attention I could give to them, amongst "the many circumstances peculiar to that amazing dispensation, "(from several of which, as I conceive, the divinity of its "original may be fairly proved) these *two* particulars most for- "cibly struck my observation; the *omission of the doctrine of a* "*future state*, and *the administration of an extraordinary provi-* "*dence*. As unaccountable as the first circumstance appeared, "when considered separately and alone, yet when set against "the other, and their mutual relations examined and compared, "the omission was not only well explained, but was found to "be an invincible medium for the proof of the divine legation "of Moses: which, as unbelievers had been long accustomed "to decry from this very circumstance, I chose it preferably to "any other. The argument appeared to me in a supreme de- "gree strong and simple, and not needing many words to en- "force it, or, when enforced, to make it well understood.

"Religion hath always been held necessary to the support of "civil society, because human laws alone are ineffectual to "restrain men from evil with a force sufficient to carry on the "affairs of public regimen; and (under the *common* dispensa- "tion of Providence) a future state of rewards and punishments

* These objections have been brought forward by a number of infidel writers. Vide their arguments, collected and answered by Warburton, Div. Leg. Vol. IV. In the Appendix to his Fifth Book, he refutes those of Bolingbroke. Vide also Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, Vol. II. Letters xxv. xxvii. xxx. and xxxiii. Vide also Leland's Answer to Morgan, ch. xi. Vide also Calmet's Dissertation sur la Nature de l'Ame, Tom. xxvi. p. 196.

† Warburton's Divine Legation, B. VI. sect. vi. the Recapitulation, p. 362.

"is confessed to be as necessary to the support of religion, be-
"cause nothing else can remove the objections to God's moral
"government under a providence so apparently unequal, whose
"phenomena are apt to disturb the serious professors of religion
"with doubts and suspicions concerning it, as it is of the
"essence of religious profession to believe, *that God is a*
"*rewarder of them that seek him.*

"Moses, who instituted a religion and a republic, and incor-
"porated them into one another, stands *single* amongst ancient
"and modern lawgivers, in teaching a religion without the
"sanction, or even so much as the mention of a future state of
"rewards and punishments. The same Moses, with a singu-
"larity as great, by uniting the religion and civil community of
"the Jews into one incorporated body, made God, by natural
"consequence, their *supreme civil magistrate*, whereby the form
"of government arising from thence became truly and essen-
"tially a THEOCRACY. But as the administration of govern-
"ment necessarily follows its form, that before us could be
"no other than an extraordinary or equal providence. And
"such indeed not only the Jewish Lawgiver himself, but all
"the succeeding rulers and prophets of this republic, have in-
"variably represented it to be. In the mean time, no lawgiver
"or founder of religion amongst any other people ever promised
"so singular a distinction; no historian ever dared to record so
"remarkable a prerogative. This being the true and acknow-
"ledged state of the case, whenever the unbeliever attempts
"to disprove, and the advocate of religion to support, the
"divinity of the Mosaic dispensation, the obvious question
"(if each be willing to bring it to a speedy decision) will
"be, whether the extraordinary providence thus prophetically
"promised, and afterwards historically recorded to be perform-
"ed, was real, or pretended only. We believers hold that it
"was real: and I, as an advocate for Revelation, undertake to
"prove it was so: employing for this purpose as my *medium*,
"the *omission* of a future state of rewards and punishments.
"The argument stands thus:

"If religion be necessary to civil government, and if religion
"cannot subsist under the common dispensation of Providence,
"without a future state of rewards and punishments; so con-
"summate a lawgiver would never have neglected to inculcate
"the belief of such a state, had he not been well assured that

"an extraordinary providence was indeed to be administered "over his people. Or were it possible he had been so infatu- "ated, the impotency of a religion wanting a future state, "must very soon have concluded in the destruction of his "republic: yet nevertheless it flourished and continued sovereign "for many ages.

"These two proofs of the proposition, that an extraordinary "providence was really administered, drawn from the *thing* "*omitted*, and the person omitting, may be reduced to the fol- "lowing syllogisms:

"First, Whatsoever religion and society have no future state "for their support, must be supported by an extraordinary "providence. The Jewish religion and society had no future "state for their support; therefore the Jewish religion and "society were supported by an extraordinary providence.

"And again, secondly, The ancient lawgivers universally "believed, that a religion without a future state could be sup- "ported only by an extraordinary providence. Moses, an an- "cient lawgiver, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, "(the principal branch of which wisdom was inculcating "the doctrine of a future state,) instituted such a religion: "therefore Moses believed that his religion was supported by "an extraordinary providence.

"This," says the learned writer, "is the argument of the "Divine Legation; plain, simple, and convincing, in the opinion "of its author; a paradox in the representation of his adver- "saries."

This argument he afterwards sums up in the following words: "The doctrine of a future state is necessary to the well-being "of civil society, under the *ordinary* government of providence: "all mankind have ever so conceived of the matter. The Mo- "saic institution was without this support, and yet it did not "want it. What follows, but that the Jewish affairs were ad- "ministered by an extraordinary providence, distributing re- "ward and punishment with an equal hand, and consequently "that the mission of Moses was divine."*

The learned writer, in another passage,† explains why he judged it necessary to prosecute his argument in the very *extended* manner in which he has pursued it; "including a severe

* Warburton, B. VI. sect. vi. vol. v. p. 404.

† Warburton, B. VI. sect. vi. the Recapitulation, particularly 366.

"search into the religion, the politics, and the philosophy of "ancient times, as well as a minute examination into the nature "and genius of the Hebrew constitution." It is indeed to be "*lamented* that he was induced to take so *wide* a range, as, in his researches* into heathen antiquity, and sometimes in his theological criticisms, he has been led into discussions altogether unnecessary for the defence of revelation; and in some of which, it can scarcely be denied, that his proofs are deficient, and his conclusions precipitate: and this is still more to be lamented, as the bulk into which these discussions swelled, and the controversies arising from them, occupied his attention so long, that they appear to have made him finally weary of his subject, and prevented him from giving that minute attention to the nature and genius of the Hebrew constitution, which he originally designed, as he *never completed the last volume* of his work, intended to support what had been already proved,† "in "a seventh book, which was intended to contain a continued "history of the religious opinions of the Jews, from the time "of the earlier prophets to the time of the Maccabees; an "eighth book, which was destined to consider the personal

* I believe few impartial reasoners will be found to admit the full truth of this learned writer's opinions, as to the origin and use of the Pagan mysteries, in Book II. sect. iv. Compare Leland on the Advantage of Revelation, Vol. I. Part I. ch. viii. ix. and Vol. II. Part III.; the entire of which appears to prove, that much of the Second Book of Warburton is overstated. In truth, the supposition that "none of the ancient philosophers "believed a future state, nay, that they held such principles that they could "not possibly believe it, though they universally taught it," appears as ill-founded as it is paradoxical. The views of these ancient sages on this subject were indeed obscure, and their arguments neither clear nor certain; their opinions therefore were unsteady and fluctuating. But that they all steadily agreed in firmly disbelieving, and yet hypocritically affirming, the doctrine of a future state, nobody, I think, can believe, who will read with an unprejudiced mind *Plato's Phædon*, or the *first book of Cicero's Tusculan Questions*. I have always been impressed with the fullest conviction of the sincerity of these writers; while I could not but pity and lament the darkness and uncertainty which concealed from these great luminaries of the heathen world this most important truth. Consult, on this subject, Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Vol. II. part iii. Warburton's opinion as to the recent date of the book of Job, is, I believe, very generally questioned by the best critics; vide Peters on Job, and Dr. Magee's Dissertation on that subject, in his work On Atonement and Sacrifice, from p. 321 to 347. And surely much of what Warburton has advanced, on the sixth book of the Æneid, the Rise of the Art of Medicine, the Interpretation of Dreams, &c. however ingenious and entertaining, can scarcely be considered as necessarily connected with the defence of Revelation. Vide Warburton, Book I. sect. iv.; Book I. sect. i. iii. iv.; and Book IV. sect. iii. iv.

† Vide Warburton, the two last pages of the Divine Legation.

"character of Moses, and the genius of his law, as far as it "concerns or has a relation to the character of the lawgiver, "and to supply a full and satisfactory answer to those who may "object, that a revealed religion without a future state of "rewards and punishments is unworthy the Divine Author to "whom it is ascribed." And we have still further to lament, that only a *fragment exists of the ninth book*, "intended to ex- "plain at large the nature and genius of the Christian dispen- "sation, and to assign the great and principal reason of the "omission of future rewards and punishments in the sanctions "of the Jewish law."

This able writer has thus left us to deplore the want of his learning and sagacity, in the illustration of those topics which it is necessary here to discuss: it becomes therefore the more incumbent on us to consider this important subject with the most patient attention, and conduct our reasonings concerning it with the most cautious sobriety.

That there is a close connexion between the extraordinary providence by which the Jewish law was supported, and the omission of future rewards and punishments in the sanctions by which the inspired lawgiver enforced its observance, was, I believe, first perceived by this able writer, though, when stated, it appears not only undeniable, but obvious. It does not however appear to me, that the reasoning of this celebrated prelate establishes his conclusion as certainly and clearly as he himself supposes, or that the omission of a future state of retribution in the sanction of the Mosaic Law will *singly and independently prove*, that an *immediate* and *extraordinary* sanction must have subsisted. It appears to me, a concurrence of circumstances may be conceived, where such a conclusion would not follow from the omission of future sanctions; because the good effects generally resulting in the present life from virtue, particularly from the observance of our social duties, and the corresponding pernicious consequences of vice, may form a certain degree of present sanction to the moral precepts of religion, even without any certainty of an immediate extraordinary providence; and that the punishments of civil law, and the protection of the civil magistrate, may supply an additional *present* sanction to the practical part of religion, and give some authority to its positive institutions. True it is, both these sanctions must necessarily be very inadequate, and the system of religion founded

on them must be very imperfect; yet a state may be supposed to commence, and to continue at least for a considerable length of time, even with a system of religion thus imperfect, and a degree of sanction thus inadequate; and if we suppose a legislator to find a nation indisposed to receive the belief of a future state, while he feels that he has no pretensions to the aid of an extraordinary providence, it is not incredible, that he may endeavour to make the best he can of so disadvantageous a situation, and promulgate a system of religion and policy, relying only on abstract reason to prove the existence of some superior power, who prefers virtue to vice, and sanctioning his laws only by civil penalties. Conceiving this combination of circumstances possible, I do not concur with the learned Warburton, when he maintains, that the omission of a future state in the religious system of a legislator, is singly and directly sufficient to prove that system supported by an extraordinary providence; but I do most fully coincide with him in thinking, that the particular circumstances of the Jewish legislator, and the particular nature of the system he established, are such, that no such hypothesis can be at all applied to account for the omission of future sanctions in the Mosaic law; and that nothing but the reality of an extraordinary providence, clearly experienced both by the legislator and the people, could have originally established and afterwards preserved that system, notwithstanding the omission of a future sanction. And I contend, that the reality of an extraordinary providence being established by unquestioned testimony, and by the general nature of the Mosaic code, we can thence satisfactorily account for the omission of a future sanction, and that this is the only way in which it can be accounted for; so that such omission, far from being inconsistent with the divine original of the Jewish dispensation, results from the operation of that extraordinary providence which attends such divine original. In a word, Warburton considers the omission of a future sanction, as a medium from which, independent of all other proofs, an extraordinary providence may be proved to have attended the Jewish dispensations: I consider it only as a fact for which an extraordinary providence (the reality of which ought to be proved from other sources,) will satisfactorily account.

I have thus endeavoured clearly and briefly to explain, how far I dissent from, and how far I adopt, the general argument

of this celebrated prelate; and I am the more anxious to do this, because I do not recollect that any writer on this subject has viewed that argument with an impartial and unprejudiced mind. While its author lived, his splendid talents and extensive learning raised in his followers and defenders such enthusiastic admiration, they could not perceive, or at least would not allow, he had been in the minutest point erroneous; while the keenness of his controversial asperity, the loftiness of his literary pretensions, and the paradoxical form in which he too frequently chose to clothe his opinions, roused in his answerers a zeal of opposition, which would sometimes yield him no credit for the discovery of any truth. Time should now enable us to view him in his true light: in reasoning sagacious, yet precipitate; in criticism ingenious, but not unprejudiced; his comprehensive view sometimes embraced in the process of his inquiries too wide an extent; while his quick imagination sometimes led him to combine his arguments with too slight a connexion: but when he directed to any one grand point his undivided and unprejudiced attention, he frequently diffused over it the radiance of genius, and discovered the recesses of truth. Happy had his humility been equal to his talents, and had his temper been as calm and tolerant, as his understanding was luminous and penetrating: his researches would then have been conducted with more caution and impartiality, would have produced more unexceptionable conclusions, and been attended with happier success.

But to return to the immediate object of our present inquiry. It seems to me, on the fullest examination I could institute into the sacred records of the Old Testament,* first, that *Moses did not sanction his Laws by the promise of future rewards and punishments;* and secondly, that the history he records, shows not only that *he himself believed a future state* of retribution, (which Warburton admits) but *contains such proofs* of it, as must naturally suggest it to every serious and reflecting mind, though with less clearness than the succeeding works of the Old Testament, which exhibit this great truth with a perpetually increasing lustre, till by David, Solomon, and the prophets, it was so authoritatively revealed, as to become an article of

* The reader will easily perceive, that the first of these opinions I hold in common with Warburton; and that in the second, I directly oppose him.

popular belief and practical influence among the Jewish people, and thus prepare the way for the reception of the Gospel scheme.

I proceed to prove these facts, and endeavour to account for their existence, and point out their connexion with each other, and with the whole scheme of the Jewish revelation, in order to show, that the entire system was worthy that divine original to which it is ascribed.

That the Jewish Lawgiver supports his Laws by the declaration, that an extraordinary Providence would punish their violation, and reward their observance in the present life, without any express declaration of a further sanction in a future state, seems clear and undeniable on the most attentive consideration of the Pentateuch.* Not only is the *whole nation* menaced with temporal punishments, but *individuals* are threatened and encouraged in the same manner. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, we find the Legislator directing the solemn denunciation of the curses due to every violator of the Law, to be proclaimed in the great congregation of the twelve tribes, and assented to by all the people. In the twenty-eighth, the nature of the curses thus denounced, and of the opposite blessings, is fully and emphatically described, when we find *both to be entirely temporal*, though in the highest degree awful and impressive. And in the twenty-ninth we are distinctly told, that *if any individual transgressed, he* would be *subject to the same curses:* "Lest," says the Lawgiver,† "there should be among "you man or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth "away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the "gods of these nations; lest there be among you a root that "beareth gall and wormwood: and it come to pass when he "heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his "heart, saying, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the ima-"gination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. The "Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and "his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses "that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord "shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord "shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, ac-"cording to all the curses of the covenant which are written in

* Vide, for a full view of the proofs of this point, Warburton's Divine Legation, Book, V. sect. iv. Vol. IV. 286.

† Deut. xxix. 18—21.

"this book of the Law." That these curses were of a temporal nature is undeniable; they were, with regard to the individual, to be of the same kind as those which were to be inflicted on the nation, which are immediately described, in the following clear and energetic language, to be such:* "That the genera-"tion to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and "the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when "they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which "the Lord hath laid upon it; and that the whole land thereof "is brimstone, and salt, and burning,† that it is not sown, "nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon, like the over-"throw of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which "the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: Even all "nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto "this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then "men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of "the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them "when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

The employment of temporal sanctions with regard to *individuals*, is indeed abundantly proved, by the punishments denounced against offences which were of such a nature that they might easily escape *detection*, or could scarcely admit of being proved by legal evidence: the man who compounded an oil similar to that appropriated to the sacred uses of the tabernacle;‡ he who, while polluted with uncleanness, presumed to partake of the peace-offering of the Lord; || he who, on the great day of atonement, should do any work, or should not afflict his soul;§ he who labouring under no uncleanness, should neglect to celebrate the Lord's passover;¶ and finally, the soul that doth aught presumptuously;** to each of these it was denounced, "That soul shall be cut off from among his people:" that is, shall suffer temporal death. The very *nature* of *some of these offences*, as †† Warburton has observed, proves nothing *beyond temporal death* could be the penalty; and we must understand

* Deut. xxix. 22—25.

† N.B. The present barrenness of the land of Judea is objected by Voltaire, and others, against the truth of the sacred history, which represents it as flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands; how absurdly, when this very *barrenness* is the full *accomplishment* of this and other prophetic denunciations! Vide the assertion, and its confutation by Warburton, Book V. sect. i. Vol. iv. p. 146.

‡ Exod. xxx. 33. || Levit. vii. 21 & 25. § Ib. xxiii. 29.

¶ Numb. ix. 18. ** Numb. xv. 30. †† Book VI. sect. iii. Vol. v. p. 149.

the same expression in the same sense, in the last instance, in which if it stood singly some doubt might perhaps be entertained.

Admitting then that temporal sanctions alone were annexed to the Mosaic Law, how can this be accounted for? I answer, from the *very nature of that theocracy* which God established as the form of the Jewish government, and that extraordinary Providence which attended it. "This extraordinary Providence," says Warburton, (very truly) "is represented as administered, first, over the state in general; secondly, over private men in particular: and such a representation we should "expect to find, from the nature of the republic; because as an "extraordinary Providence over the state necessarily followed "God's being their tutelary Deity, so an extraordinary Providence as to particulars, follows as necessarily from his being "their supreme magistrate."*

The reality of this extraordinary Providence it has been the object of the preceding Lectures to establish, without recurring to the medium of proof adopted by Warburton: it has at least been attempted to shew, that the † structure of the Mosaic history confirms in the strongest manner the reality of the miracles on which the certainty of that extraordinary Providence was founded. The ‡ connexion of the common events of the Jewish history with the miraculous, has been shewn to be so close, that the very foundation of the acknowledged history of this singular nation would be overturned, and the succession of common events would be unnatural and unaccountable, except the miracles on which they depend are admitted. The history of the § miracles themselves has been shewn to possess the four decisive marks of truth, which prove they could neither have been credited by the generation supposed to be cotemporary with them, nor at any subsequent era introduced into the system of the national records, and the national religion, if they had not been real and divine. The whole scheme of the Jewish ritual, and the singular constitution of the tribe of Levi, was shewn to be commemorative of these miracles, founded on their certainty, and designed to perpetuate the acknowledgment of their truth. ‖ And still further, in examining into the political constitution

* Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. iv. Sub-section II. vol. iv. p. 286.

† Vide Part I. Lect. IV. ‡ Part I. Lect. V. § Part I. Lect. VI.
‖ Part I. Lect. VI.; also Part II. Lect. I.

and civil laws of the nation, we have perceived that both were founded on the acknowledged certainty of such an extraordinary Providence, on which depended the limitation of the legislative and executive authorities; the original distribution, and subsequent tenure of property—the extraordinary regulations of the Sabbatic year, and the year of jubilee—the command for all the males to assemble at the capital three times a year—and a variety of regulations in the penal laws of the state, otherwise unaccountable and inadmissible. In a word, it has been shewn, that the Jewish polity and the Jewish magistracy were merely mediums employed by the Divinity, to facilitate the regular administration of the extraordinary Providence by which the Deity determined to govern this chosen race, with the * solemn assurance, that wherever that established constitution should be found inadequate for their government, either as to the whole state, or as to individuals, the Deity himself would interfere, and by an immediate and extraordinary distribution of rewards and punishments, exalt virtue and depress vice.

Such was the scheme of the Jewish dispensation. Can we discover why such a system was adopted? Undoubtedly, no mere human sagacity can penetrate into all the reasons of the divine economy; but some reasons, most important, Providence has permitted to appear.

Such a scheme was abundantly † sufficient to support the interests of religion and morality, because it was abundantly sufficient to convince man "That God is, and that he is a rewarder "of those who diligently seek him." ‡ Still further, it seems very evident this system was the *only* effectual mode of supporting true religion and sound morality, at *that period of society*; because it was the only one which afforded a fair opportunity of directly observing, and experimentally feeling, the existence, the power, the justice, and the providence of the one great Jehovah; and *contrasting them* with the *nullity* and the *impotence* of those base *idols* which had usurped his place in the estimation of deluded man: and thus subverted the barriers of virtue, and opened wide the flood-gates of vice.

Let it be remembered, that the system of idolatry was founded on the belief both of *present* and *future* rewards and punishments, as dispensed by the false gods which it upheld: all the

* Vide Part II. Lect. III.

† Vide Warburton, Book V. sect. ii. Vol. iv. p. 153. ‡ Heb. xi. 6.

surrounding nations attributed their prosperity, as well national as individual, their success or failure in war and commerce; nay, the blessings of nature, the rains of heaven, and the fertility of the earth, to the influence of their false gods. Now the *superiority* of the *true* God could *never* be *established* by a *comparison of his power in the distribution of future and* * *invisible rewards and punishments;* it was only by proving decisively, that he, and he alone, was the dispenser of every blessing and every calamity in the *present* life, and that he distributed them with the most consummate justice, yet tempered with mercy; that he could completely expose, and for ever discredit, the pretensions of idolatry. This then seems one chief reason why *present, not future,* sanctions were employed in the Jewish dispensation; thus only could the cause of the great Jehovah be maintained in the midst of an idolatrous world.

Another reason appears to be derived from the *intellectual* and *moral character* of the *Jewish nation,* which was totally incapable of that pure and rational faith in the sanctions of a future state, without which these sanctions cannot effectually promote the interests of piety and virtue. Their desires and ideas confined to the enjoyments of the present world, they would pay little attention to the *promises* of a *future* retribution, which they could *never* be *sure were fulfilled;* nor could such motives be able to counteract the temptations of present pleasure or present interest, which vice so frequently holds out; or the allurements of voluptuous festivity and impure gratification, by which idolatry attached its votaries. In truth, the history of the Jewish nation, while under the immediate guidance of their Lawgiver, proves, that far from being familiarized with the just and philosophic notion of the Supreme Divinity, as possessed of power unbounded in its operation and extent, they were inconceivably slow in supposing or believing that he could produce any effect different from what they had already seen him produce, or exercise any power they had not already experienced. Thus the wonders they had seen in Egypt, and the miraculous passage over the Red Sea, did not at all banish despondence, or inspire them with perfect confidence in divine aid. When, two months after, they found their *food* exhausted, and no na-

* Vide the quotation from the atheist Vanini; Warburton, v. iv. p. 317. "Bonarum ac malarum actionum repromissiones pollicentur, in *futura* tamen "vita, ne *fraus* detegi possit."

tural supply at hand, immediately they exclaim,* "Ye have "brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assem- "bly with hunger." Although that terror was removed by a regular supply of food from heaven, yet this continued miracle did not prevent them from feeling an exactly similar terror, when a short time after, they found themselves without *water* to drink: Again they exclaim,† "Wherefore is this that thou hast "brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and "our cattle, with thirst?" And afterwards, when they found the people whom God commanded them to invade, were great and powerful, and their cities strongly fortified, their past experience of the divine protection did not yet convince them that God was able in this new difficulty to secure them conquest and success; on the contrary, they were filled with total despair, and determined to rebel against their Lawgiver, and return into Egypt.‡ Now, with such a people, how little influence would the *remote* and *invisible*, and therefore to them *uncertain* or *incredible*, sanctions of a *future state* possess, how little would they avail, in opposition to the temptations of vice and the allurements of idolatry? Indeed the only mode of promulgating that important doctrine of a future retribution, with effect, seems to have been that which the Jewish history assures us was adopted; even preparing the way for it, by a continued system of extraordinary Providence, fully proving to both Jews and Gentiles, that the Supreme Jehovah possessed the will and the power to punish vice and reward virtue with the strictest justice. This conviction once confirmed by long experience and unquestionable facts, they would be *prepared to believe* that the *same* immutable Divinity would display the *same justice* in a *future state*, when that extraordinary Providence should be withdrawn, which had been hitherto employed as best suited to the infancy of mankind, and the peculiar circumstances of the chosen race. But formally to annex the sanctions of a future life to a system of laws, which declared that it was to be supported in every part by an extraordinary Providence, distributing immediate rewards and punishments, appears not only unnecessary, but inconsistent. It would have seemed as if the Legislator who appealed to the *sanction* of an *extraordinary* Providence, was yet *secretly conscious* that his pretended expectations would not be verified by fact; and therefore *craftily* provided a *supplementary* sanction, to com-

* Exod. xvi. 3. † Exod. xvii. 3. ‡ Numbers xiv.

pensate for this deficiency, by denouncing *future* rewards and punishments; as to which, no human being could *certainly discover* whether this denunciation was really fulfilled or not.

Thus the nature of the Jewish theocracy, and the character of the Jewish people, compared with the purposes that theocracy was intended to effect, and the temptations against which that people was to be guarded, seem sufficiently to account for the sanction of an immediate and extraordinary Providence being employed to support the Mosaic Law, rather than the rewards and punishments of a future state. To support such a theocracy an extraordinary Providence was indispensably necessary; the Deity would be degraded, if supposed to command as an immediate sovereign, without enforcing immediate submission.

Add to this, that all national obedience and national transgression could, *as such*, be recompensed only by *national* prosperity or national punishment; these therefore God their sovereign undertook to dispense with exact justice: a wonderful and awful sanction, altogether wanting in every other state.

Inferior magistrates were empowered to inflict punishments for such offences against morals, and such violations of the religious constitution, as they could take cognizance of; in the same manner as similar magistrates in other states. But here, and here only, the *Supreme Sovereign*, even GOD himself, undertook to supply every defect in all inferior administrations, and reward every man according to his works, as immediately and conspicuously as any civil magistrate could possibly do; employing therefore for this purpose immediate and temporal sanctions. In a word, in this polity, offences against the state, and against individuals, were also offences against religion; because the entire Jewish Law was in every part equally the law of God. As, therefore, offences against the state, and against individuals, in this as in every other community, must be restrained by immediate punishments, not merely by the terrors of a future state; so, in order to preserve consistency, and prove that God was really equally the author of the entire system, he undertook to support every part alike, by an exact distribution of temporal sanctions. The sanctions of a future life were therefore in such a system, not only unnecessary, but were foreign from its design, and therefore omitted by its inspired author. But surely the promulgation of a system of Laws thus circumstanced, could not originate from any source but a divine authority; as

it manifestly could not be maintained for any length of time by any but a divine power—controlling when necessary the course of nature, and the conduct of man, to accomplish its purposes and execute its will.

The confirmation which the evidence of Revelation derives from the extraordinary Providence exercised over the Jews, is not the *only* good effect resulting from it. In this dispensation, mankind are enabled to discern the principles and the process of that moral government which God exercises over nations, even in the course of his ordinary providence, which undoubtedly dispenses public prosperity and public calamity, and regulates the rise and decay of empires, on the very same principles which are so strikingly displayed in the history of the chosen people. The divine interposition in the general government of the world is indeed conducted by the regular operation of secondary causes, and therefore more silent and unseen than the course of that extraordinary Providence then exhibited; but it is not therefore less certain, or less effective. In this part of sacred history the judgments of God are distinctly and solemnly exhibited for the instruction of man. Here we are convinced by experimental and decisive proofs, that "the Most High "ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever "he will;"* "that wisdom and might are his;"† "that the "race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;"‡ for "it is the Lord of Hosts who governs the hearts of kings, and "subdueth the strength of the mighty;"§ "He hath purposed, "who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who "shall turn it back?"‖ "Who hath hardened himself against "him, and prospered?"¶ In a word, in the history of the Jewish state this great truth is clearly and powerfully impressed—That as "righteousness exalteth a nation," so "sin is the re-"proach of any people:"** a lesson which, but for the immediate and extraordinary Providence displayed in this awful dispensation, could never have been so forcibly inculcated, or so clearly understood.

* Dan. iv. 17. † Ibid. ii. 20. ‡ Eccles. ix. 11.
§ Job xii. ‖ Isaiah xiv. 27. ¶ Ib. ix. 4.
** Proverbs xiv. 34.

SECT. II.—*Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children—In what sense to be understood—Not unjust—Necessary in a theocracy, as far as relates to temporal and national punishments—Chiefly denounced against idolatry—In this case not only just but merciful—Human tribunals not permitted by the Mosaic Law to act upon this principle—Why—Analogous to God's general providence—A dispensation of mercy rather than severity—Limited in its extent and application.*

EXODUS XX. 5, 6.

"Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generations of them "that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my command-"ments."

THE consistency and necessity of *temporal* sanctions in the Jewish Law, we have endeavoured to establish, in the last Section: if with success, we derive from this a clear and easy answer to the objection which at first appears to arise from the denunciation, "That God would *visit* the *sins of* the *fathers* "*upon the children*, to the third and fourth generation of them "that hate him; and shew mercy unto thousands in them who "should love him, and keep his commandments." The only circumstance that makes this denunciation appear *severe* or *unjust*, and this promise *unreasonable*, is the supposition, that the sanctions of a *future* state are understood; which it would certainly be repugnant to the divine justice to suppose should be distributed according to such a rule as this. But this objection altogether vanishes, the moment we are convinced that the reward and punishment here meant, relate only to outward circumstances of prosperity and distress in the present life; because, if such a sanction was necessary in the particular system of providential administration by which God thought fit to govern the Jewish race, it is evident any inequality as to individuals would be certainly and easily remedied in a future life;*

* We cannot but believe this to be the case, in many instances of divine judgment recorded in the sacred history; as in the children of Achan involved in the punishment of his violation of the divine anathema, Joshua vii. 24, (though it is possible they may have seen his conduct, and by concealing it, been partakers of his guilt;) and in the punishment denounced in consequence of the idolatries of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab, involving their

so that each should receive his final reward exactly according to his true merit in the sight of God, and "thus the Judge of all "the earth do right."

Now it seems undeniable, that *such* a sanction was a *necessary* part of the Jewish polity, so far as this required a providential distribution of *national* rewards and punishments. *These* affecting the great mass of the people, and extending through such portions of time as were necessary to give them their full efficacy in forming the national character, could not be confined within the limits of a single generation; or exclude from their operation each private family in succession, as the heads of that family might drop off, whose conduct had originally contributed to swell the mass of national guilt, or contribute to the progress of national improvement.

Thus, when it became necessary to chastise the Jewish idolatry by a captivity of such a length as might permanently reform it, which was the result of the captivity in Babylon, a period of seventy years was found scarcely adequate to this effect. Thus the sins of the parents were necessarily visited on the children to the third generation, so far as related to national suffering. Yet surely we cannot derive any impeachment against divine justice or mercy, from a dispensation which placed the children of the guilty in a situation so *favourable* for their *moral* and *religious* improvement, by checking the crimes of their parents; while those individuals, who, though exempt from the national guilt, might yet be swept away in the overwhelming torrent of national calamity, would meet abundant compensation for their unmerited sufferings, by the favour of their God in another and a better world.

entire posterity. At least in the instance of Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, this recompense seems to be more than obscurely hinted at. On his falling sick, Jeroboam's queen disguises herself, and repairs to Abijah the prophet; who, though blind with age, is enabled by God immediately to discover her, and to announce to her, that God would destroy the whole house of Jeroboam; and in particular, that the moment she entered into the city to her own door, her son should die; and it is added, 1 Kings xiv. 13, "And all Israel shall "mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the "grave," (i. e. obtain regular burial) "because in him there is found some "good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam." On this fact can we believe the reflecting Jews even then understood that the only recompense to the child's goodness was his dying of a disease rather than by the sword, and being regularly buried and mourned for, though he died prematurely, while his idolatrous father was permitted to reign twenty-two years? I acknowledge this narrative appears to me to supply an *intelligible hint of a future state.* Vide the next Lecture.

Considered therefore, as forming part of a scheme of *national* reward and punishment, the sanction thus promulgated was equally just and necessary; and to promulgate it thus clearly, could not but materially contribute to check the inconsiderateness of transgression, and confirm the steadiness of virtue. But the Mosaic Law certainly employed the same sanction to influence the conduct of each individual. Nor is this objectionable, if that sanction was a necessary part of the providential system of discipline exercised over the nation at large. Each individual by his separate transgression contributed to the accumulated weight of national guilt; and it was just, that each should be taught to regard the share of national calamity, which he and his posterity must sustain, as a *personal* chastisement from the hand of God.

But the operation of this sanction was not confined to the participation of national rewards or punishments; it certainly affected individuals who violated the commands to which it was annexed, even though such violation was confined to themselves, and could not therefore draw down any national chastisement; but let it be recollected, that the great crime, the temporal punishment of which was to extend to the third and fourth generation, was *idolatry*;* that source of all profaneness and pollution, which, under the Jewish polity, was not only a violation of that religious duty for which the children of Israel were set apart from every nation under heaven, but was besides the *highest crime* against *the state*, which acknowledged Jehovah as supreme Sovereign, the sole object of civil allegiance, as well

* On this subject, Maimonides, More Nevochim, Pars. I. cap. liv. p. 90, makes the following observations, which seem just and important: "As to "that character of God, of visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the "children, know, this relates only to the crime of idolatry; as may be proved "from the Decalogue, which says, on the third and fourth generation of them "which *hate me*; for nobody is said to *hate* God but an idolater: as the Law "expresses, (Deut. xii. 31.) 'Every abomination of the Lord which he "hateth have they done unto their gods:' and mention is made of the fourth "generation, because *no* man can hope to *see more* of his progeny than *four* "generations. When, therefore, the idolaters of any city are to be put to "death, then not only the parent idolater shall be destroyed, but his son, and "his grandson, and his great grandson; as if it said, By this denunciation it is "signified, that the seed and posterity of idolaters were to be cut off, how-"ever young, on account of the crimes of their parents and ancestors. And "this precept we find universally observed in the Law; whence, against a "city which had apostatized to idolotry, the Law commands that it should be "destroyed, and every thing therein; and this for the sake of guarding "against and preventing that pollution and guilt, which might otherwise arise "from it."

as of religious worship; on whose immediate protection the whole nation depended; from whom was derived the authority of every part of the government, the tenure of all property, and the enjoyment of every civil right. To introduce idolatry, was therefore to subvert the foundation of the social union, to violate the most solemn and sacred duties of allegiance, and engage in the foulest treason, and the most audacious rebellion. The supreme Sovereign therefore denounced against such treason and such rebellion, not only *condign punishment on the offender himself*, but the *extension* of this *punishment* to his family and *immediate descendants;* a principle recognised by so many of the most civilized states, in which the *crime of treason* is punished not only by death, but the *confiscation* of property, and the *taint* of blood: a principle which, when carried into execution by a human tribunal, may operate in particular instances with unmerited or excessive severity, but which in the Jewish state was applied in every instance by unerring justice. "For the Deity, "(as Warburton well observes*) though he allowed capital "punishment to be inflicted for the crime of *lese majesty*, on the "person of the *offender*, by the delegated administration of the "Law; yet concerning his family or posterity, he *reserved the* "*inquisition of the crime to himself*, and expressly *forbad* the "magistrate to meddle with it, in the common course of justice. "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither "shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man "shall be put to death for his own sin."† "Now God's appro-"priating to himself the execution of this Law would abun-"dantly *justify* the *equity* of it, even supposing it had been given "by him as part of an *universal* religion; for why was the "magistrate forbidden to imitate God's method of punishing, "but because no power less than omniscient could, in all cases, "keep clear of injustice in such an inquisition?"

Nor was this sanction chargeable with *cruelty*, more truly than with injustice. It is indeed evident, that to extend the

* Divine Legation, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 332.

† Deut. xxiv. 16. See this law acted upon, 2 Kings xiv. 5 & 6.; where we are told, that Amaziah king of Judah, "as soon as the kingdom was con-"firmed in his hand, slew his servants which had slain the king his father. "But the children of the murderers he slew not; according unto that which "is written in the book of the Law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, "saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the "children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to "death for his own sin."

temporal punishment denounced against idolatry by the Jewish Law, to the family of the idolater, might be the *tenderest mercy*, as the most probable method of checking the contagion of that infectious crime, amongst a people who were habituated to consider temporal punishment as the sure criterion of divine displeasure; and whom its infliction was therefore the only effectual mode of awakening to serious reflection and humble penitence.

Thus the principle of visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, unto the third and fourth generation, by extending the temporal judgments denounced against the perpetration of idolatry to the immediate posterity of the idolater, is perfectly consistent with the divine justice; because it interferes not with that final retribution at which every man shall be rewarded according to his works. It was in truth a dispensation of mercy calculated to restrain the crimes of the parents by one of the most powerful motives which can influence the human heart, the terror of involving their innocent progeny in temporal calamity and ruin; while, with respect to the children, it tended to guard them against the otherwise almost resistless contagion of parental example, and place them in the most advantageous circumstances for recovering their virtue and their piety. It was an essential part of that system of extraordinary providential government, which Jehovah judged it necessary to exercise over the Jewish nation; since *national* rewards and punishments necessarily extended *beyond* the limits of a *single* generation, in order to produce any permanent and general effect. And finally, it was strictly analogous to the general system of the divine government over the whole human race; since in what is termed the common course of events, we perpetually find families and nations for a long series of years involved in the mischiefs arising from their parents follies and crimes, or enjoying the blessings derived from their wisdom, virtue, and fortitude. The Jewish scheme proceeded on exactly the same principles; with this only difference, that the Supreme Jehovah, the immediate Sovereign as well as the tutelary God of the Hebrew nation, undertook to dispense this, as well as every other species of reward and punishment, by an immediate and * extraordinary

* Warburton's observation on this subject, Book V. sect. v, Vol. iv. p. 335, seems just and conclusive: "God," says he, "supported the Israelites in "Judea, by an extraordinary administration of his Providence; the con- "sequences of which were, *great temporal blessings*, to which they had no "*natural claim*, given them on condition of obedience. Nothing, therefore,

Providence, in which justice should be tempered with *abundant mercy* confining the providential and temporary *punishment* for the parents crimes to the *third* and *fourth* generation; while it encouraged adherence to virtue and to God, by the assurance of a *reward*, similar indeed in kind, but infinitely superior in degree, and which under the common course of events could not be hoped for; promising to extend the blessings obtained by parental obedience and piety, even to the *thousandth* generation of those who love God.

Thus we perceive, how perfectly all the parts of this awful and wonderful dispensation harmonized together; and with what strict truth, as well as majestic sublimity, the Hebrew Lawgiver describes Jehovah proclaiming his name:* "The Lord, the Lord "God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in "goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving "iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means "clear the guilty;" (and in perfect consistence with these attributes) "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, "and upon the children's children."

That this sanction of the Jewish Law was not to be understood as a *general* principle of the divine economy, under *every* form of civil society, and *every degree* of religious improvement; but merely as a necessary part of that administration of an extraordinary Providence by which the Jewish Law was sanctioned and upheld during the earlier periods of its existence; has been proved by Warburton, from a circumstance which infidel writers have laid much stress upon as an instance of contradiction between different parts of Scripture; when in truth it was only a gradual change in the divine system, wisely and mercifully adapted to the gradual improvement of the human mind. Towards the conclusion of this extraordinary economy, (observes Warburton) when God by the later prophets reveals his purpose of giving them a NEW DISPENSATION, in which a future state of rewards and punishments was to be brought to light (or rather, according to my system, *substituted* in place of an immediate

"could be more equitable than, on the violation of that condition, to with-"draw those extraordinary blessings from the children of a father thus "offending. How then can the Deist charge this Law with injustice? "since a posterity, when *innocent*, was affected only in their *civil conditional* "rights, and when deprived of those which were natural and unconditional, "were always guilty."

* Exod. xxxiv. 6 & 7.

extraordinary Providence as the sanction of religion;) it is then declared in the most express manner, that he will *abrogate* the Law of punishing children for the crimes of their parents. Jeremiah,* speaking of this new dispensation, "In those days "they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, "and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall "die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, "his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold the days come, saith "the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of "Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the "covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I "took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt "(which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband "unto them, saith the Lord:) But this shall be the covenant "that I will make with the house of Israel in those days; I will "put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; "and will be their God, and they shall be my people." And Ezekiel, speaking of the same times, says,† "I will give them "one heart, and will put a new spirit within you; and I will "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an "heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes and keep "mine ordinances: and they shall be my people, and I will be "their God. But as for them, whose heart walketh after the "heart of their detestable things, and their abominations, I will "recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord "God."

Thus in the Jewish system, a people of gross and carnal minds and short-sighted views, slow to believe any thing they could not themselves experience, and therefore almost incapable of being sufficiently influenced by the remote prospect of a future life, and the pure and spiritual blessedness of a celestial existence, were wisely and necessarily placed under a Law, which was supported by a visible extraordinary Providence, conferring immediate rewards and punishments on the person of the offender: or laying hold of his most powerful instincts, by denouncing that his crimes would be visited upon his children and his children's children to the third and fourth generation: a proceeding which made a necessary part of that national discipline under which the Jews were placed, and which was free from all

* Jeremiah xxxi. 29—33. Compare Ezekiel, ch. xviii. the entire chapter.
† Ezek. xi. 19—21.

shadow of injustice; because, when the innocent were afflicted for their parents crimes (as Warburton has well observed) it was by the deprivation of temporal benefits, in their nature forfeitable. Or should this not so clearly appear, yet we may be sure, God, who reserved to himself the right of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, would perfectly rectify any apparent inequality in the course of his providential government over the chosen people, in another and a better world; by repaying the innocent, who had necessarily suffered here, with an eternal and abundant recompense.

LECTURE IV.

A FUTURE STATE KNOWN TO THE JEWS.

SECT. I.—*Doctrine of a future state, though it does not form the sanction of the Mosaic Law, is yet contained in the Writings of Moses.—Warburton's assertions on this subject hasty and inconsistent with each other—and with the Seventh Article of the Church of England—Future state intimated in the history of the creation and the fall—by the circumstances attending the death of Abel—by the translation of Enoch—by the command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac—Future state must have been known to the Patriarchs, and influenced their conduct—attested in the Epistle to the Hebrews—instanced in the history of Jacob—of Moses—by our Lord's reply to the doubts of the Sadducees—the declaration of Balaam—Future state an object of popular belief among the Jews—from the laws relating to necromancers, &c.*

HEBREWS, xi. 13.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were "persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims "upon earth"

IN a former Lecture,* I have endeavoured to establish the *first* position I had laid down respecting the connexion that subsisted between the Mosaic Law and the belief of a future state of retribution; even *that Moses did not sanction his Laws by the promise of future rewards and punishments;* and to assign such reasons for this part of the divine economy, as the nature of the subject suggested. I now proceed to discuss the second conclusion, which an attentive perusal of the Old Testament appears to me to establish on this subject; even that *the history recorded by the Jewish Lawgiver shows, that he himself believed a future state of retribution; and that it contains such proofs of it, as must naturally suggest it to every serious and reflecting mind,* though with less clearness than the succeeding scriptures of the Old Testament, which exhibit this great truth with a perpetually increasing lustre, until by the Prophets it was so authoritatively revealed, as to become an article of popular belief and

* Part III. Lect. III. sect. i. supra.

practical influence amongst the Jewish people, and thus *prepare the way* for the reception of the Gospel.

This position is abundantly confirmed by the Apostle to the Hebrews, in his eleventh chapter. It appears, however, very *different* from the opinion of the celebrated Warburton, with whose sentiments on the former part of this subject, I so nearly agreed. The subject of his *fifth book** is to prove, *That the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is not to be found in, and did not take part of, the Mosaic dispensation.* One part of this proposition, that a future retribution was *not employed* as a *sanction* of the Mosaic Law, and in this sense made no part of the Jewish dispensation, *I admit*, and have endeavoured to account for, in agreement with the principles of this celebrated prelate. The other part, that *the doctrine of a future state is not to be found in any part* of the Mosaic records, I am compelled to *dissent* from. This opinion is, however, strongly expressed by this learned writer. He asserts, "*In no one place* "of the Mosaic institutes, is there the least mention, or any "intelligible hint, of the rewards and punishments of another "life:" † and afterwards, "I shall show, from a circumstance the "clearest and most incontestable, that the Israelites, from the "time of *Moses* to the time of *their captivity, had not* the "*doctrine* of a future state of rewards and punishments."‡ *This circumstance*, if really existing, would certainly be decisive to establish the conclusion it is brought to support. It is in brief, that throughout the entire Old Testament, various as the Sacred Writings are, in their subject, style and composition, and various as the occasions on which they were composed, and the characters of their authors; yet, says this eminent writer, "in none of these different circumstances of life, in none of "these various casts of composition, do we ever find them "acting on the motives, or influenced by the prospect of future "rewards and punishments, or indeed expressing the least hope "or fear or common curiosity concerning them; but every "thing they do or say respects the present life only, the good "and ill of which are the sole objects of all their pursuits and "aversions."§ And again, "I infer, as amidst all this variety "of writing the doctrine of a future state, never once appears

* Vide Book V. sect. i. Vol. iv. p. 133.

† Divine Legation, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 318.

‡ Ibid. p. 344. § Warburton, Vol. iv. p. 344.

"to have had any share in this people's thoughts, it never did "indeed make any *part of their religious opinions.*" And again, "Their subterfuge is quite cut off, who pretend, that Moses did "not indeed propagate the doctrine of a future state of rewards "and punishments, in writing, but that he delivered it to tra- "dition. For we see he was so far from teaching it, that he "studiously contrived to keep it out of sight, nay, provided for "the want of it; and that the people were so far from being "*influenced by it*, that they *had not even the idea of it.*"*

The authority of this learned writer would have raised considerable doubts in my mind, but that his *own* subsequent *concessions*, on the very same points, appear so different from the opinions I have now stated, as either entirely to overturn them, or at least limit them in such a manner as is perfectly consistent with the *second position* I have laid down. For, in the Sixth Book, sect. v. he thus explains his opinion: "But though it "appears that a future state of rewards and punishments made "no part of the Mosaic dispensation, yet the law had certainly "a spiritual meaning, to be understood when the fulness of "time should come: And hence it received the nature, and "afforded the efficacy, of prophecy. In the interim, the mys- "tery of the Gospel" (including by this learned writer's *own definition*, the doctrine of a future retribution) "*was occasionally* "*revealed by God* to his *chosen servants, the fathers and leaders of* "*the Jewish nation; and the dawning of it was gradually opened* "*by the Prophets, to the people.* And which is exactly agreeable "to what our excellent church, in its Seventh Article of Reli- "gion, teacheth concerning this matter:

"ARTICLE VII.—*The Old Testament is not contrary to the* "*New; for both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting life* "*is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between* "*God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign* "*that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises.*"†

It seems difficult to *reconcile* this tenet of the church with this learned writer's opinion, "that through the *whole* Old "Testament, we never find any of the authors of the various "compositions it contains, acting on the motives or influenced "by the prospect of future rewards and punishments."

* Warburton, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 359.

† Ibid. Book VI. sect. v. at the beginning, Vol. v. p. 194.

In truth, the mischief of rashly adopting a system, and forcing Scripture to bend to that system, is most conspicuous in this celebrated writer, on this subject. When he first states the idea, and adopts it as the basis of his reasoning, he advances in the most unqualified manner, "that throughout the whole "Old Testament, *from Moses to the Captivity*, the Israelites *had* "*not* the *doctrine* of a future state of rewards and punishments; "and that so much as an *intelligible hint* of it is not found in "the Mosaic law." In the passage immediately before us, he admits, "that it was *occasionally revealed* by God to his chosen "servants, the fathers and leaders of the Jewish nation; and "that it was gradually opened by the Prophets to the People." And in another passage he limits his assertion thus: "As my "position is, that a future state of rewards and punishments "was not taught in the Mosaic dispensation, all texts brought "to prove the knowledge of it, *after the time of David*, are as "impertinent as the rest (for what was known from his time, "could not supply the want of what was unknown for so many "ages before): this therefore puts all the prophetic writings out "of the question."* The direct opposition between the assertion, that it was unknown *until the Captivity*, and yet gradually opened by the Prophets *after the time of David*, is obviously the consequence of that excessive rapidity of reasoning, and obstinate adherence to a preconceived system, which are too plainly discernible in this celebrated writer. But the opinion I have above stated will, I trust, be found to combine the various truths which his system has exhibited, while it avoids the inconsistencies in which it is involved. I shall therefore endeavour to establish it by direct evidence, somewhat at large; as it is a point of considerable importance in contemplating the progress of the divine economy, and the connexion between the Jewish and the Christian schemes.

In the Mosaic account of the creation, the manner in which the formation of man is recorded, seems important in the view of this subject. God is represented as entering on this part of his work, as it were, with peculiar deliberation and solemnity: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our "likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, "and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all

* Warburton, Book VI. sect. i. Vol. v. p. 9.

"the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon "the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the "image of God created he him: male and female created he "them."* The account is afterwards resumed. Of man alone, amidst all the tribes of animated nature, it is said, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, "and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man "became a living soul."†

The history having thus described the formation of this favoured creature, proceeds to relate the manner in which the divine goodness provided for his accommodation and support. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and "there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the "ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant "to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the "midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and "evil. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the "garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it. And the Lord "God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the "garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the know-"ledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the "day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."‡

When, after the fatal transgression of this easy command, God pronounced the sentence of judgment on the transgressors, he declares to the serpent, "Because thou hast done this thou "art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; "upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the "days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and "the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall "bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."§ To man he declares, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow "shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and "thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the "herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat "bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast "thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou "return."‖

But, notwithstanding this melancholy doom, God is represented as still prolonging the existence of our first parents,

* Gen. i. 26, 27. † Ib. ii. 7. ‡ Ib. 8, 9, 15—17.
§ Ib. iii. 14, 15. ‖ Ib. ver. 17, 19.

providing for their immediate comfort, and assuring them of a numerous posterity. "Adam called his wife's name Eve, "because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also "and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and "clothed them."* Then follows a very remarkable passage, which is peculiarly worthy of attention, on this subject: "And "the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to "know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, "and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever; "therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of "Eden, to till the ground, from whence he was taken. So he "drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden "of Eden, cherubins, and a flaming sword, which turned every "way, to keep the way of the tree of life."†

From the entire of this account it seems clearly deducible, that man, by his original constitution, was destined for immortality. When God is said to have created man *after his own image*, surely it is no straining of this expression to interpret it as denoting not only reason and freedom of will, moral rectitude, and the power of dominion over inferior animals, but also a nature capable of and designed for immortality, without which, all the preceding endowments, however exalted and splendid, would have been so transient and ineffectual, so vainly and unworthily bestowed. When, of all animated beings, it is asserted of man alone, that GOD *breathed* into his nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul;‡ we cannot

* Gen. 20, 21. † Ib. iii. 22, &c.

‡ I am aware that the words which are translated "living soul," דיוד נפש, are the same which are employed in Gen. i. 30, to denote all inferior animals in which "is life," or as it is more accurately rendered in the margin of our Bibles, "*a living soul.*" But my argument is, that man *alone* being made *after the image of God*, man *alone* being described, as having received from God *immediately* the breath of life; and man *alone* being represented capable of *living for ever*, by partaking of the tree of life; the whole tenor of the history marks him out as in his original nature, destined for immortality; and that the divine promise of a *future deliverer*, inspiring a strong assurance of mercy, must have produced an humble but confident hope in every pious, reflecting and believing mind, of being ultimately restored to this privilege of immortality. This interpretation of the Sacred History is justified by the most respectable authorities, ancient and modern. The *Targum* of *Onkelos*, though it retains in Gen. i. 30, the original expression, common to men and inferior animals, of a living soul; yet in Gen. ii. 7, substitutes the expression, of a spirit enjoying the capacity of speech, לרוח ממללא—and the Arabic version renders the same verse, "And Adam "was made a rational soul;" thus showing how strongly these translators felt the reasonableness of distinguishing the principle of life in man and

much distant from those commentators, who conceive the breath of life, thus *immediately* derived from God, partook of the immortality of its divine Author, and that the living soul which man thus acquired, deserved that title much more eminently than the animating principle of any of the brute creation, all of which are described as formed with such different views, and sharing so inferior a degree of their Creator's favor. And, finally, to prove clearly that man was originally intended for immortality, we are told that the *tree of life* was placed in the midst of the garden, whose efficacy was such, that if man was permitted to take of it, he would *live for ever*. Can it be denied that these passages suggest some intelligible hint of immortal

inferior animals. And in this distinction, the Targum of Jonathan B. Usiel concurs with the Targum of Onkelos, in adopting the same expression in Gen. ii. 7. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni.

"It is not to be doubted," (says *Perrerius*) "that from these few words, "in which Moses has related the creation of a rational spirit, it may be "proved that the soul is immortal; which Moses has frequently intimated "both in this and his other books." And *Riveto* on this passage, disputes at large on the immortality of the soul. *S. Method. Conviv. Virg. p.* 75, asserts, "It is false doctrine, that the immortal substance of the mind, "which GOD himself *breathed* into us, was generated along with the mortal "and frail substance of the body." Cyrill Alex. de Adorat. lib. x. Vol. I. p. 356, and Comment. in Joan, lib. v. p. 471, resolves the immortality of the soul into "the virtue and support of the divine breath breathed into man." "Man," says Theodoret and several of the ancient Fathers, "must be cer- "tainly admitted to a noble share of divine intelligence and ideas, since "these were a privilege *breathed* into him by his Maker at his creation, a "dignity and eminence of nature superior to that of all other animals."

The expression of the *image* of GOD also plainly implies the idea of the soul's immortality, according to the best commentators. Abarbinel explains it to mean, "an approach to the divine likeness in understanding, freedom of "choice, spirituality and immortality." And *Tertullian contra Marcion*, cap. ix. "Habent illas ubique *lineas* DEI, qua *immortalis* anima, qua libera, "et sui arbitrii, qua prescia plerumque, qua rationalis, capax intellectus et "scientiæ." *Vatablus* and *Paulus Fagius* make this image to consist "in "immortality, innocency, holiness, and the other perfections of the soul, as "well as in man's dominion over inferior animals." The learned and judicious Edwards, in his Survey of the various Methods of Religion, Vol. I. p. 13, and 17, observes, "Besides the dominion over the creatures, and "something in the outward man, the image of God consists chiefly in the "soul: first, as this part of us is of an immaterial and spiritual nature, and "such is God, 'he is a Spirit,' John iv. 24. Again, the soul of man is "immortal, and therein is God's image and representation. This indeed "follows upon the former quality; it being immaterial and incorporeal, it "must needs be in its own nature incorruptible; herein we signally resem- "ble the Deity. And therefore it is rightly asserted by St. Augustin, that "because of the immortality of the soul, though not *only* for that, man is "said to be made after God's image." Vide also Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, ch. v. the three last paragraphs, which express the same sentiments. Vide also Poli Synopsis, Patrick, and Bibliotheca Biblica on Genesis, i. 26. and ii. 7.

life, some idea at least of the capacity of the human soul to enjoy an eternal existence?

It will be said, all this relates to the state of man before his fall, but that by this fatal transgression the hope of immortality was totally cut off, and eternal death was the melancholy doom which every human being must look to as the close of his existence. Now to me the Sacred Narrative seems to imply the very contrary conclusion, and to hold out to penitent man the hope, that notwithstanding his privilege of enjoying eternal life *in this present world* was withdrawn, he yet might hope for the continuance or the renewal of his existence in another state. It may be remarked, that the very words of the curse denounced against him by his offended God, in which, if any where, this awful doom would be declared, seems not at all to convey it. Man had been described originally consisting of two distinct parts; he was "formed of the dust of the earth," and "God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became "a living soul." Now to the former part, and to the former part alone, does the letter of the curse confine itself. "In the "sweat of thy face," says the divine Judge to fallen Adam, "shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for "out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust "shalt thou return." Here the dissolution of the bodily frame, and its return to its original dust, is the only thing menaced; the extinction of that breath of life which God had inspired, the destruction of that living soul which man had been described as possessing, is not so much as hinted at.

But if from the letter we direct our attention to the spirit of the narrative, this conclusion seems to acquire irresistible strength. It is admitted, that in the very condemnation of deluded man, his heavenly Judge tempered the severity of justice with mercy, and guarded against that despair which would have extinguished the vital principle of virtue;* by giving assurance of a deliverer to spring from the seed of the woman, who should bruise the head (that is, subdue the power and punish the malignity) of the serpent who had seduced them. If we admit the divine institution of sacrifice,† at this crisis, which is surely the most rational interpretation of the

* Vide Sherlock, on the Use and Intent of Prophecy, Discourse III. p. 60.

† Vide on this subject, Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, chap. xiv.; and Dr. Magee's Second Sermon, on Sacrifice and Atonement, with the notes.

narrative concerning the beasts slain immediately after the fall; and of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel; it will follow, that the very mode in which this deliverance should be effected was not indistinctly pointed out: even that God would accept the life of the great Sacrifice, which the sacrifices now instituted prefigured, as a substitute for the life, and an atonement for the sins, of man.

But whether Adam could or could not conceive the particular mode in which it was to be effected, he certainly cherished a sure hope of future deliverance. Now let me ask, what hope could he have cherished, if he conceived of death as the final extinction of his being? If eternal annihilation was his own fate, what consolation could he derive from the promise of a future deliverer? What mixture of hope would have remained to sustain the energy of virtue, had he conceived of that death which inevitably awaited him and all his posterity, as a total extinction of being? I contend, therefore, that the very history of the creation and fall of man, not only suggested the idea, and gave an *intelligible hint* of a future state, but was calculated to inspire every serious and pious mind with an humble but assured hope, that they were in the hands of a merciful Judge, who, though he thought it necessary to remove them from this world by a corporeal dissolution, would yet preserve that breath of life, that living soul, which he had himself inspired, and which had been formed after the image of God, from total annihilation and eternal death.

Such seems to have been the conclusion naturally suggested by the history of the Fall. But this conclusion must have derived great additional clearness and strength, from the circumstances attending the very first instance of death inflicted upon man, combined with the knowledge of the divine attributes, which revelation and experience had supplied.

They saw, when "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground "an offering to the Lord; and Abel, he also brought of the "firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof: and the Lord "had respect unto Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and to "his offering he had not respect: and Cain was very wroth, "and his countenance fell." God pointed out the unreasonableness of this wrath: For "the Lord said unto Cain, Why art "thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou "doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not

"well, sin lieth at the door." But no admonition could correct the moroseness of his malignity; for "it came to pass when "they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother, "and slew him." Immediately divine justice arraigns the murderer, and pronounces his condemnation: for God said, "What "hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto "me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the "earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's "blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall "not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and "a vagabond shalt thou be upon the earth.*"

Yet the severity of the divine justice was tempered with mercy: when the wretched criminal deprecates the infliction of his punishment as "greater than he could bear," and, distracted by the horrors of conscience, views in every human being an avenger eager to retaliate his cruelty on himself, exclaiming, "it shall come to pass, that every one who findeth me, shall "slay me." God mercifully assures him his life should be protected, and sets a mark upon him, lest any finding him should kill him. He is indeed banished from the sacred spot where the immediate presence of the Lord displayed its glory; but yet abundant time is afforded him for repentance, his life is protracted, and we find his family flourishing and numerous: This is entirely conformable to our ideas of the divine attributes. But contemplate the fate of Abel, and let us consider what would have been its effect upon the mind of every human being, if they conceived death was total annihilation. He perished in consequence of his acting in a manner conformable to the will, and acceptable in the sight of God. "By faith," says the Apostle, "Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice "than Cain; by which he obtained witness that he was righte-"ous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead, yet "speaketh."† What is the plain meaning of the Apostle's declaration? This, assuredly, that the death of Abel speaketh the immortality of the soul, in language too plain to be misunderstood. Nor can we conceive that the circumstances attending this first infliction of death upon man, could have been ordered by Providence so as to testify more plainly this great truth of a future state of recompense, had this been the sole purpose for

* Genesis iv. 3—12. † Heb. xi. 4.

which they were designed. To conceive that a just and merciful God should openly approve the sacrifice of Abel, and yet permit him, in consequence of that very action, to suffer a cruel death,* which put a final period to his existence; while his murderer, whom the same God openly condemned, was yet permitted to live; all this is so monstrous, so contradictory to the divine attributes, as to prove beyond possibility of doubt, that this event was permitted to take place, partly at least, in order to shew that death was not a final extinction of being, but on the contrary a passage from this world to another, where the righteous should be recompensed for their adherence to the will of their heavenly Father, in opposition to suffering and death, by a sure and eternal reward.

* This transaction has been viewed in the same light by some very respectable commentators. Paulus Fagius observes, "His blood poured forth, "witnesses that you put him to death. Let this comfort the pious, who "are slain for their justice, that they still live with God, and are his chief "care." Vide Poli Synopsis.—Taylor, p. 102, observes, "The Patriarchs "before and after Job, and the Israelites before Christ, had a notion of a "future state. By sacrifices was plainly shewn, that a way was open to the "divine favour and acceptance; and the favour of God imports happiness; "which to Abel, who was for that very reason, because he was accepted of "God, unjustly slain, could be only in a *future* state; Heb. xi. 4, and dying "on account of that faith, 'he yet speaketh' an invisible future state of "reward. The translation of Enoch and Elijah in two distant ages were "well known demonstrations of a future state of reward and glory. The "Jews were certainly acquainted with God, and angels, and heaven, where "both resided, Gen. xxii. 11; and the connexion between this world and "heaven, by the ministry of angels, was clearly represented to Jacob, Gen. "xxviii. 12; they must therefore have a notion of another and a better "world." Vide Taylor's Scheme, ch. xxiv. p. 102.

It is likewise remarkable, that the Pelagians turned the death of Abel to an argument, that there was no evil in death, because it conveyed him, and does all such, to a more happy and glorious state; the fallacy of which St. Augustin exposes, by distinguishing between the act, which was that of murder in Cain, and the consequence, which was martyrdom in Abel. St. Augustini Opus imperfect. contra Julian, lib. vi. tom. x. col. 1355.—Doddridge also interprets the words "being dead yet speaketh," as referring to the testimony borne as it were to a future state, by his story, &c. Vide his Family Expositor on Heb. xi. 4.—But perhaps the most decisive testimony is that of Philo, who in his tract on the subject of *the Evil plotting against the Good*, comments on the death of Abel at large, and amongst other things observes, "Abel (paradoxical as it may appear) though cut off, lives; he is "cut off in the judgment of the unwise, but he lives in God a life of bliss; "and this the divine oracle attests, for it expressly declares, he cries out "against the criminal by whom he suffered: but if he no longer existed, "how could he thus cry out? Thus the wise man who appears deprived of "this mortal life, lives an immortal one; but the wicked man, living in "guilt, is, with respect to that blessed life, dead," &c.—Vide Philonis Opera, p. 127, Letter *c*.—Vide also my learned friend, the Rev. Peter Roberts' note on this passage, in his very useful Work on the Harmony of the Epistles, p. 505. He observes, that "the words of God, Gen. iv. 6 & 7

In the next chapter, * another fact is recorded, which surely conveys an intelligible hint of another state of existence; by giving an instance of one mortal, distinguished for piety, being translated to that state without passing through death: † For we are told of Enoch, that he "walked with God, and he was "not: for God took him." It has been said, that this fact is related with a studied obscurity and brevity, as if to conceal the idea of another life.‡ But this is surely an unfounded inference; it is related in exactly the same style and manner as every other fact in this part of the patriarchal history; and it is so plain, that the only possible way of concealing or obscuring the information it contains, would be entirely to suppress the fact. Enough is told to justify the observation of the Apostle, "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see "death; and was not found, because God had translated him: "for before his translation he had this testimony, that he "pleased God." § And the inference of the author of Ecclesiasticus, Enoch pleased the Lord and was translated, being an "example of repentance to all generations." ‖

The next circumstance I shall notice in the history of the Patriarchs, is the command of God to Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. As to the purport and object of this command, I adopt with the greatest pleasure the opinion of the learned Warburton,¶ who with equal ingenuity and truth, (as appears

"probably gave rise to a dispute about the justice of God, which Abel's "insisting on, was, with such an evil disposition as Cain's, likely to pro-"voke the fatal resentment that followed. In this opinion the Jewish com-"ments agree; and the examples of a faith which was maintained to death, "being a lesson to posterity, it is no hard straining of language to say, that "Abel preaches or speaks still to us of the purity and firmness of his faith "in a future life; because as to this life, all his hopes and interest vanished "the moment in which he risked the loss of the present."

* Genesis v. 24.

† This is the clear interpretation established by the authority of the Apostle. By others, the original has been differently explained; "he did "not appear," or "was not found," say the Samaritan and the Septuagint versions; the Syriac, "he ceased to be;" the Arabic, "he died." The Targum of Onkelos indeed asserts, "he did not appear, and God did not "cause him to die;" but all unite in declaring that God took him; and the direct declaration of this will establish a future state with equal clearness, even if he passed through death. This fact must therefore have *suggested an intelligible hint of a future state* from the first, however interpreted. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni.

‡ Warburton, Book V. sect. v. subs. ii. Vol. iv. p. 322.

§ Heb. xi. 5. ‖ Eccles. xliv. 16.

¶ Divine Leg. Book VI. sect. v.; the very satisfactory Dissertation on the command to sacrifice Isaac.

to me) has proved, that when God says to Abraham, 'Take 'now thy son, thine only son Isaac,' &c. "the command is "merely an information by action, instead of words, of the "great sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of mankind, given "at the earnest request of Abraham, who longed impatiently "to see Christ's day; and is that passage of sacred history "referred to by our Lord, where he says to the unbelieving "Jews, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and "'he saw it, and was glad."' To this able writer I refer, for the proof of this being the true explanation of this contested passage; and I entirely agree with him in the consequences he deduces from it. "Two great ends," says he,* "seem to be "gained by this interpretation: the one, to free the command "from a supposed violation of natural law; the other to sup- "port the connexion and dependency between the two revela- "tions; for this interpretation makes the history of the com- "mand a direct prophecy of Christ as Redeemer of the world."

I have introduced this part of the sacred history for the purpose of quoting another part of this learned Writer's reasoning on this passage, which appears important on the present subject. "Of the principal reason of this command," says he,† "the "words of Jesus are a convincing proof. Nay, I might go "farther, and say that this is not the only place where the true "reason of the command is plainly hinted at. The Author of "the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of this very command, "says, By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up "Isaac, accounting that God was able to raise him up even "from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure; "ΕΝ ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ, in a parable: a mode of information either "by words or actions, which consists in putting one thing "for another. Now, in a writer who regarded this commanded "action as a representative information of the redemption of "mankind, nothing could be more fine or easy than this expres- "sion. For, though Abraham did not indeed receive Isaac "restored to life after a real dissolution, yet the son being in "this action to represent Christ suffering death for the sins "of the world, when the father brought him safe from Mount "Moriah after three days (during which the son was in a state

* Divine Leg. Book VI. sec. v. Vol. v. p. 223.
† Ibid. Vol. v. p. 238.

"of condemnation to death) the father plainly received him, "under the character of Christ's representative, as restored "from the dead. For, as his being brought to the Mount, there "bound, and laid upon the altar, figured the death and suffer- "ings of Christ, so his being taken from thence alive, as pro- "perly figured Christ's resurrection from the dead. With the "highest propriety, therefore, and elegance of speech, might "Abraham be said to receive Isaac from the dead in a parable, "or in representation."

Adopting this (as appears to me) just and ingenious explana- tion of this piece of sacred history, it is obvious, and indeed is confessed by this learned writer, that the doctrine of a resurrec- tion to life, even of Christ's resurrection, must have been known to Abraham and Isaac, as well as to their families. Can we then suppose so important a truth would have been by them sup- pressed? No: it was assuredly communicated from them to the succeeding Patriarchs, and formed the support of their virtue and the source of their consolation, through all the sorrows and sufferings of their eventful lives. True it is, the peculiar pur- poses of the divine economy did not permit the Jewish Lawgiver to employ it as the sanction of his Laws, which were to be en- forced by an immediate extraordinary Providence, and therefore he was not allowed to promulgate it so plainly as to make it a direct article of the popular creed; but it was intimated with sufficient clearness to be discernible to minds of a superior class, capable of reflection, and adapted to rise to greater heights of piety, exhibit bright examples of virtue, and prepare the way for the full manifestation of the counsels and the mercies of God, by that Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, whose sufferings and resurrection for the redemption and justification of man, the remarkable transactions we have been now considering so plainly represented and prefigured.

But to establish the fact, that the conduct of the Patriarchs was influenced by the prospect of a future life, I should choose to rely on an authority superior to that of any article of mere human composition, even the authority of the Apostle to the Hebrews, who has distinctly stated and clearly illustrated this position: "By faith," says he, "Abraham, when he was called "to go up into a place, which he should after receive for an in- "heritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he "went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a

"strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, "the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a "city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is "God."* And again, speaking of the Patriarchs: "These all (says the Apostle†) died in faith, not having received the promi- "ses, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of "them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims "upon earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly "that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful "of that country from whence they came out, they might have "had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a bet- "ter country, that is, an heavenly. Wherefore God is not "ashamed to be called their God:‡ for he hath prepared for "them a city."

In this passage, the Apostle plainly refers to the remarkable declaration of Jacob to Pharaoh, when that monarch inquired from the venerable Patriarch, "How old art thou?" And he answered, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hun- "dred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years "of my life been, and I have not attained to the days of the "years of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage."§ In truth had there been no state of existence beyond the present life, this Patriarch would have received very inadequate proofs of that distinguished favour, with the hope of which God encou- raged him, when, in the vision at Luz, he declared himself "the God of his father Abraham, and of Isaac; and that he "would give the land whereon he lay to him and to his seed; and "that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed."‖ Nor was this all: to the promise of this public distinction and general blessing was added a promise of personal favour and pro- tection: "And behold," said God, "I am with thee, and will "keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee

* Heb. xi. 8—10. † Ibid. xi. 13—16.

‡ On this subject, Witsius, in his Œconomia Fœderum, Lib. III. cap. ii. Sect. v. p. 262, observes: "When God declares himself a God to any, it in- "cludes eternal life; for when God from his free grace gives himself to man, "he gives him every thing, for in himself he is every thing: man therefore "finds in him a *shield* against all evil, and *an exceeding great reward* (ac- "cording to the promise to Abraham, Gen. xv. 1.) And what more can he "desire to secure full and perfect happiness, which includes eternity? Whence "the Apostle joins these two, Hebrews xi. 16: Now God is not ashamed to "be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city."

§ Gen. xlvii. 8, 9. ‖ Ibid. xxviii. 13, 14.

"again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have "done that which I have spoken to thee of."* This promise was certainly fulfilled to a certain degree, in the preservation of the Patriarch and his family during his eventful history; yet the life of Jacob was undoubtedly embittered from the very beginning with disappointment and sorrow:† from his twenty years of exile and laborious servitude under Laban; the terror of his brother's vengeance; the violent passions and great misconduct of his children; the premature death of his beloved wife Rachel; the early loss of his favourite child Joseph, which so afflicted him, that "he refused to be comforted, saying, I will go down "into the grave unto my son, mourning;"‡ the anxiety which the apprehension of famine must have excited, and his still greater terror at the apprehended loss of Benjamin, which wrung from him this pathetic complaint unto his remaining sons, "Me "have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon "is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are "against me."§ And when Reuben undertook for his security, how melancholy the perseverance of his refusal! "My son "shall not go down with you: for his brother is dead, and he is "left alone: if mischief befal him by the way in which ye go, "then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the "grave."‖ And when at length the pressure of famine compelled his assent, how strongly does the solemnity of his parting benediction bespeak the anguish of his heart; "Take your bro-"ther, and arise, go again unto the man. And God Almighty "give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your "other brother and Benjamin: if I be bereaved of my children, "I am bereaved."¶ I mention these circumstances, to shew that then as well as now (until God undertook, by an immediate and extraordinary Providence, to support the interests of virtue**) human nature required the prospect of another life to sustain

* Gen. xxviii. 15. † Vide from chap. xxviii. to chap. 1.
‡ Gen. xxxvii. 35. § Ib. xlii. 36.
‖ Gen. xlii. 38. ¶ Ch. xliii. 13, 14.

** The learned Witsius expresses this argument in the following strong terms: "Extra controversiam est Deum præstantissimum aliquid, et in "quo, supra cæteros minus Numinis reverentes, eximii essent, clarissimis "illis Patriarchis promisisse, quando se Deum ipsorum nuncupabat. Nihil "autem supra cæteros homines eximium adeo in hac terra obtinuerunt, quod "promissi hujus magnitudinem æquarat; multi improbi in terra Canaan ali-"bique vixerunt, restat ergo ut altius hæc spectarent, et ad æternam cœles-"temque vitam pertinerent."

piety and obedience, under the trials to which they were exposed; and this increases the probability that such a prospect was afforded, when such trials were imposed by the immediate agency of God.

The life of the Jewish Lawgiver affords a remarkable instance in confirmation of the truth of this position. In his youth, grieved and wearied at beholding the cruel oppression of his countrymen, he is led to attempt their deliverance, and sacrifice for this purpose all prospects of regal grandeur and present enjoyment.* But he is totally and lamentably disappointed: rejected and despised by those who were the objects of his generous patriotism, he is compelled, in order to preserve his life, to fly into exile, where he remains for forty years; and then at the age of fourscore† is compelled to quit his retirement, place himself at the head of his nation, expose himself to the resentment of the Egyptian monarch; and after having escaped this, is constantly harassed with the murmurs, the terrors, the idolatries, the rebellions of this wayward race; even his own brother and sister join in opposing his authority. This scene of severe trials lasted for forty years, in a dreary desert, surrounded by a discontented multitude; and at the end of this long period, he is not permitted to enjoy the glory of conquering the promised land, or witnessing the happiness of his nation's settlement there, but is barely allowed to see a distant prospect of this long wished-for resting place, and then hurried away by the sudden stroke of death. Yet this is the fate of a man of exemplary piety, who, though sometimes in the heaviness of his spirit he is driven to entreat of God, "If thou deal thus with me, kill "me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy "sight; and let me not see my wretchedness;"‡ yet still preserves to God constant resignation, and to his ungrateful countrymen unabated affection.

Now we may ask, Is it not natural to suppose that God, who employed this distinguished character as the chosen instrument for communicating his Law to the whole Jewish nation, should have sustained him in so severe a trial, by the clear prospect of a future recompense? And though the peculiar purposes of the divine economy would not permit him to employ a future recom-

* Vide Exod. ii. 11, et seq. † Exod. vii. 7.
‡ Numb. xi. 15.

pense as the sanction of his laws, is it not extremely probable that he communicated this joyful hope to these select and pious men who shared his burdens and assisted his councils? Or, when they compared his character with his fate, and observed that God sustained his bodily and mental powers with supernatural vigour, to the last moment of his life, so that at the age of "one hundred and twenty years," immediately before his death, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated:"* when they observed all this, could they suppose that on a sudden his existence was closed for ever, and the favour of his God withdrawn?† Surely this could never be the conclusion of any pious or reflecting mind. How much more just and rational is the reasoning of the Apostle to the Hebrews on this subject, even if we were to pay no regard to his inspired authority: "By "faith," says he, "Moses, when he was come to years, refused "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter—choosing rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the "pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ "greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect "unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook "Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as "seeing him who is invisible."‡

Finally, if on considering the entire history of the Patriarchs, and comparing the decided declarations of the divine favour towards them, with the very inadequate effects of that favour in this life, the certainty of a future recompense was not a natural as well as a just conclusion, obvious to every pious, reflecting, and unprejudiced mind; could our blessed Lord, when he urged

* Deut. xxxiv. 7.

† On this subject the learned and judicious Edwards makes an important observation. Vol. I. p. 168, he is employed in proving, "that the benefit of "the legal sacrifices expiated the offences of all true penitents, though they "were never so great." And he confirms it thus: "Is it not acknowledged, "and that because it is manifest from several instances, that the crimes of "persons have been forgiven and pardoned, though they themselves were "not exempted from the penalty? Moses' death was the recompense of his "unbelief, though none doubted of his expiring in the divine favour. David "was punished with the death of his child, though we read that his *sin was* "*pardoned*.* Josiah was justly snatched away in battle, because he engaged "in it against the divine will and command; but yet he '*died in peace*,' i. e. "in the favor of God, and was translated to the place of everlasting peace "and happiness.†

* Samuel xii. 13, 14.

† Compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. with 25. and Jer. xxii. 10.

‡ Heb. xi. 24—27.

this conclusion against the Sadducees, have charged them with error, because they "knew not the Scriptures, nor the power "of God;"* that is, because they did not consider the Scripture history as they ought, or argue fairly from the divine attributes? In answer to their difficulty against the belief of a resurrection, deducible, as they conceived, from the Mosaic Law respecting marriage, our Saviour replies, "Do ye not therefore err, because "ye know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God? For "when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor "are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in "heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye "not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake "unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of "Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the "dead, but of the living; ye therefore do greatly err."† This is not the language of one announcing a new argument, which, before his application of it, had been utterly undiscoverable by human sagacity; but rather of one drawing an obvious conclusion from plain facts, which nothing but wilful blindness or culpable prejudice had prevented from being previously seen.

I therefore contend it is reasonable to suppose, that minds neither inattentive nor prejudiced, but on the contrary candid, pious and reflecting, may have argued in a somewhat similar manner, and from the Scripture history of the Patriarchs, concluded the divine favour towards them was not confined to the present life; though no one, before our blessed Lord, had established this conclusion with such clear reasoning and such irresistible force.

We may further observe, that though the Jewish Lawgiver did not directly promulgate the doctrine of a future state, as the sanction of his Laws; yet there is no reason why he should suppress any declaration of that doctrine made by others, or why we should distort any expression which naturally conveys that doctrine, when recorded by Moses as used by others, on a supposition that it was not intended to convey it. I therefore see no reason to doubt that the remarkable expression ascribed by Moses to Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and "let my last end ‡ be like his," really means what it obviously

* Matt. xxii. 29. † Mark xii. 24—27.

‡ Taylor affirms, and it seems on good grounds, that the word אחרית translated "last end," means strictly an after or future state, not only here

imports—a wish to die the death of the righteous, in order to enjoy the happiness of another life, which the righteous only can share.

Balaam was certainly gifted at this time with a portion of the prophetic spirit, though he abused this favour of his God; and the interpretation now assigned is surely more natural than that of Warburton, which explains these words as merely expressing his wish, "Let me die in a mature old age, after a life of health "and peace, with all my posterity flourishing about me; as was "the lot of the righteous observers of the Law:" * an interpretation which appears most forced and unnatural.

It is an obvious remark connected with this subject, that the clauses of the Mosaic Law directed against those who had familiar spirits, and against wizards and necromancers, which are repeated at least four different times in the Pentateuch,† and also the continuance of this superstition, notwithstanding that all these prohibitions were frequently enforced with the greatest rigour; a continuance so clearly instanced by the history of Saul, and particularly by his own recourse to the witch of Endor;‡ all these circumstances prove that the existence of the soul in a separate state was deeply fixed in the popular belief among the Jews, and that the abuse of this tenet formed a leading feature of the popular superstition; a circumstance the learned Prelate so frequently alluded to, appears to have forgotten, when he asserted in such an unqualified manner, "that the Jews under "the Mosaic Law never expressed the least hopes or fears of a "future state, or so much as any common curiosity concerning "it."§

but in many other places cited in this argument; of which as they occur, vide Taylor's Scheme of Divinity, ch. xxiv. p. 103.

* Div. Leg. Vol. v. p. 143. and Deut. xviii. 11.

† Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. xx. 27. ‡ Vide 1 Sam. xxviii.

§ Div. Leg. Book VI. sect. vi. Vol. v. 395.—It is unnecessary to enter into a minute comparison of the grounds on which Warburton maintains his assertion, and those on which I oppose it; such a comparison can be satisfactorily made, only by an impartial examination of both our arguments.—I would here merely observe, that of the circumstances I have noticed in this section, some, and those not the least important, are either not at all or very slightly adverted to by the learned Prelate, where he professes to consider the texts adduced by his adversaries. For example, in the consideration of the texts from Genesis, &c. he takes *no notice* of the mention made of the *tree of life*, of the death of Abel, or the history of Moses. Vide Div. Leg. Book VI. sect. ii. iii. & iv.

SECT. II.—*Doctrine of a future state, why not more clearly and frequently inculcated in the Pentateuch—or under the Judges—Gradual improvement of the Jews—Future state gradually promulgated suitably to this improvement—By David in Ps.* xvi. xvii. xxxvi. xlix. ciii. cxv. cxxxix.—*By Solomon in Proverbs, passim, particularly in ch.* iv. viii. xiv. xxiv.; *still more fully in Ecclesiastes, of which work this doctrine is the basis, particularly in ch.* iii. viii. xi. *and at the conclusion of the book—How further impressed on the Jews by miraculous facts—By three resurrections from the dead—By the translation of Elijah—This doctrine frequently intimated and gradually taught with the greatest clearness by the Prophets—Isaiah—Jeremiah—Ezekiel—Hosea—Joel—Amos—Nahum—And above all, Daniel—And also in the book of Job.*

DANIEL, xii. 2.

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

THE passages we have hitherto adduced, from the history recorded by the Jewish Lawgiver, and which shew that he himself believed a future state of retribution, and contain such proofs of it as would naturally impress that belief on every pious and reflecting mind, have been chiefly taken from the Book of Genesis. In the remaining part of the Pentateuch we are not to wonder that the rewards and punishments of a future life are not expressly introduced. It has been shewn that God exercised over the Jews an extraordinary providence, rewarding obedience and punishing transgression, whether national or personal, by immediate and temporal blessings and calamities; and that this system was rendered necessary by the intellectual character and peculiar situation of the Jewish people, as the only mode of counteracting their carnal dispositions and idolatrous propensities; the only mode adapted to their short-sighted views, their inadequate ideas of the divine perfections, and their unsteady faith in the divine promises.

This system was pursued, first during that most evident display of divine and miraculous power, at the promulgation of the law, and the settlement of the chosen people in the promised land; and afterwards under their judges, when for above four hundred years the Jewish nation continued, if I may so express it, under the immediate tutelage and direct control of Jehovah. During this rude and yet unsettled period, the nation seems

(naturally speaking) unfit to receive or improve any further religious instructions. Hence, during this period we find no inspired teacher, whose admonitions or prophecies have been handed down as a part of the sacred volume, except some prophecies briefly and incidentally mentioned in the history of the Judges and the book of Samuel, relating merely to immediate and temporal occurrences. No addition was now made to the instructions delivered by Moses, no further development of the divine plans vouchsafed. But after a sufficiently long trial of the immediate power of God to guide and protect the chosen people, they were permitted to establish a regal government, and rise into notice among the surrounding nations: their foes were subdued by Saul and David; a magnificent temple was erected by Solomon, where the public worship prescribed by the Mosaic ritual was conducted with the strictest regularity, and accompanied with all the attractions of pomp, and harmony, and splendor, which could rouse the attention and command the reverence, not only of the Jews themselves, but of the surrounding nations. A lucrative trade was opened with the East,* which continued in a great measure to be conducted by the Jews, from David to Ahaz, above two hundred and fifty years. A great part of this time the Jews were powerful and wealthy; their minds were gradually enlightened by commerce and softened by peace, and the conviction of Jehovah's overruling providence gradually established by a still increasing length of experience; and thus a foundation laid for a more firm reliance on the divine promises respecting a future life.

And while the temporal discipline and fortune of the Jews thus prepared the way for the reception of religious instructions, we observe that Samuel founded the schools of the prophets, where numbers of the Levites, and probably other pious Jews, were trained from their youth to study and expound the word and the will of God, to warn the people against idolatry, impiety, and vice, and become instruments of extending the knowledge of the Jewish religion, and the worship of the great Jehovah. We now perceive Providence raising up for them instructors, first in the persons of their two most distinguished kings, David and Solomon, the former as a prophet, the latter chiefly as a moral sage: their works, from the dignity of their authors,

* Compare 1 Kings, ix. 26, with 2 Kings, xvi. 6; and vide Prideaux's Connections, Book I. from p. 7 to 17.

and from the very form of their compositions, must have been extremely popular: the pious hymns of the inspired Psalmist, praising the wonderful works of God for his chosen people, and adorning the sentiments of piety with all the charms of poetry and music, must have been read with avidity, and remembered with delight; and the sententious maxims of the royal preacher, the pride of his nation, for wisdom, power, and majesty, could scarcely fail of exciting attention to religious truth and moral duty.

We after these behold a series of prophets, delivering their admonitions and predictions, with the most intrepid resolution and the most awful menaces, to the kings and the assembled multitudes of Judah and Israel. We see some of their predictions immediately accomplished in the most important public events; and therefore their remaining prophecies must have excited general attention and anxious expectation. In truth, the schools of the prophets, established first by Samuel, supplied for ages the civil historians as well as the religious instructors of Judea; and the most distinguished prophets were so deeply engaged in public events, that their lives and writings were blended with every thing interesting in history, and preserved as parts of the national records.

The important doctrine of a future state of retribution was by these various inspired teachers gradually developed with perpetually increasing clearness and force, as the circumstances of the Jewish people required its promulgation, as well from the extension of their views by the improvement of their intellectual character, as from the gradual cessation of that extraordinary providential superintendence which became unnecessary for the support of religious and moral principle in proportion as the people became more sensible of the perpetual providence and moral attributes of the Divinity, and therefore more capable of being duly impressed with the divine promises of a future retribution.

And here, though the learned prelate so often alluded to, hurried away, it should seem, by a zeal for establishing his system on the broadest possible basis, seems originally to have maintained that no ideas of a future state were to be found amongst the Jews, previous to the captivity: yet he afterwards found it necessary to admit they were gradually inculcated by the *Prophets subsequent to David.** But assuredly he ought to

* Vide Warburton, Vol. v. p. 9, and the first Section of this Lecture.

have included this inspired Psalmist in the number of those who promulgated this great truth, not indeed with the same clearness as the last prophets, but yet sufficiently to prove his own firm belief of it, and to suggest it to the consideration of every pious and reflecting mind.

In Psalm xvi. after solemnly attesting his warm attachment to the pious, that "his delight was upon the saints that were "upon the earth, and upon such as excel in virtue;" he declares his firm confidence in the mercy and protection of his God, and his full assurance of a future state: "I have set God "always before me; for he is on my right hand, therefore I "shall not fall. Wherefore my heart was glad, and my glory "rejoiced: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For why? Thou "shalt not leave my soul in hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy "Holy One to see corruption. Thou shalt shew me the path of "life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy: and at thy right "hand there is pleasure for evermore."* It is true, the entire passage is prophetic of our Lord's resurrection, to whom alone the words, "thou shalt not suffer thy Holy One to see "corruption," are applicable, as the Apostle Peter † argues with the Jews. But assuredly the Prophet had a clear idea of future eternal happiness, and a firm confidence that he would himself enjoy it.

The next Psalm is not less express: he here opposes the sensual enjoyments on which the wicked fix their desires, to the pure celestial happiness of another life: "Deliver me, O Lord, "from the ungodly, which is a sword of thine; from the men of "thy hand, O Lord, from the men, I say, and from the evil "world, which have their portion in this life," &c. "But as "for me, I will behold thy presence in righteousness: and when "I *awake* ‡ up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."

* In this passage I use the translation of our Prayer Book; it seems clearer than that in our Bible, and full as accurate. In the meaning of the three last verses, all the interpetations agree; except that the Syriac translates the last clause, "I shall be satisfied with the pleasures of victory at "thy right hand." Vide Biblia Waltoni. Yet even this does not exclude the idea of eternity: "נצח æternitatem significat, sic dictam quasi victo-"riam temporis," says Rivetus, and adds, "Nomen hic in adverbii naturam "transit; est hoc adjunctum perpetuum beatitudinis, quæ alioqui beatitudo "non esset, si perpetua non foret." Vide Poli Synopsin.

† Vide Acts, ii. 29, &c.

‡ The word translated "awake," seems by an apt metaphor to mean, awakening from death to life, יקץ. It is used in this sense in Isaiah, xxvi. 19. and Daniel, xii. 2, where it can bear no other sense. Vide infra.

This passage was adduced by Leland, to prove the same point as I employ it for; and Warburton with his *peculiar* manner, observes, "In this the dis-

Thus again, in Psalm xxi. (which appears to me principally prophetic of the Messiah's glory, though several commentators conceive it to be spoken of David himself alone) celebrating the divine mercy, which distinguished the king, of whom he speaks, with the blessings of goodness, and set a crown of pure gold upon his head; the Psalmist adds, "He asked life of thee, and "thou gavest him a long life: even for ever and ever. His "honour is great in thy salvation; glory, and great worship "shalt thou lay upon him.* For thou shalt give him everlast-"ing felicity; and make him glad with the joy of thy counte-"nance."

In Psalm xlix. the inspired author† with unusual solemnity

"senter Leland, as I remember, in *some of his things*, seems much to "triumph; but I shall shew that it means nothing less." Warburton proceeds to observe, that the words our translators render "*shall have their* "*portion in this life*," ought to have been, "shall have their portion in *this* "*life of theirs*;" i. e. "shall be *perfectly prosperous*." This, as seems to me, may be admitted, without affecting either mine or Leland's argument; the entire force of which lies in the *contrast* the Psalmist draws between the wicked, who are thus *perfectly prosperous*, and who transmit this prosperity even beyond their own lives, to *their children*; and his own expectation, which is, most literally, "I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be "satisfied in awaking, with thy likeness." The Septuagint reads, "In "righteousness shall I be seen by thy countenance; I shall be satisfied when "thy glory shall appear:" and with this the Arabic and Ethiopic agree. The Syriac reads, "I shall be satisfied when thy fidelity shall awake;" "and this," says Warburton "means only, God's glorious and powerful in-"terposition in David's PRESENT rescue from his enemies hands." But let me ask, what then becomes of the contrast between the expectation of the Psalmist, and the fortune of those who are *perfectly prosperous*, and leave this prosperity to their *children*? Interpret David's expectation as of *present* deliverance, and the passage is obscure, unmeaning, and forced; take it in its obvious meaning of a future happiness, it is clear, rational, and beautiful. The former interpretation, therefore, could be justified only by the *certainty* that the Psalmist had and could have *no* idea of a future life; which is a plain *petitio principii*, a logical error with which all Warburton's interpretations appear to me to be infected; though he charges his opponents with exactly a similar *petitio principii* on their part, Vol. v. p. 157. The Public must decide.

* Our Bible translates the fifth verse, "Honour and majesty *hast* thou "laid upon him," instead of "*shalt*," which makes the text less decisive. Undoubtedly the original will bear this sense, yet it seems not so natural as the other; and the Targum of Jerusalem, the Septuagint, the Ethiopic, the Arabic, and the Vulgate versions, all use the future tense. The Syriac only agrees in adopting the past tense in this and the next clause. But all unite in the sense of the fourth verse, "a life for ever and ever." Vide Biblia Waltoni.

† The author of this Psalm is uncertain; and some verses, particularly the 5th, 8th, and 9th, are obscure. I use the translation of our Bible, which appears to follow the original very closely; indeed so closely as to retain its obscurities. Houbigant, in his version, removes these obscurities by some very slight alterations of the original text, which seem perfectly justifiable.

demands attention to the doctrine he purposes to enforce: "O "hear ye this, all ye people; give ear all ye inhabitants of the "world." The doctrine thus solemnly promulgated, is the folly of the wicked, who trust in their riches, and forget the approach of death, which strips them of all, and exposes them to the vengeance of God, whom riches cannot disarm. "They that trust "in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their "riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, "nor give to God a ransom for him, (for the redemption of "their souls is precious, and it ceaseth for ever) that he should "still live for ever, and not see corruption," &c. And again, speaking of the wicked, who think their houses shall continue for ever, and call the lands after their own names, he exclaims, "This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their "sayings: like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall

The 5th verse (with him the 6th) he translates, "Why should I fear in the "evil day, because that misery surrounds me?" and justifies the change, by an easy and obvious alteration of the text. And the 9th (with him the 10th) he renders, "Qui desinit in sæculum, adhuc vivet, non in perpetuum videbit "foveam, etiamsi videbit eam;" and his criticism on this verse, if admitted, would directly establish the doctrine for which we contend. "In this verse," says he, "is contained the enigma which the Psalmist prepared for, in the "4th verse; viz. that though man must pay the debt of nature, yet he would "survive his fate, and would not eternally remain in the pit. And then the "Psalmist, on account of this hope of the immortality proposed to man, re-"proaches him with not providing for this immortality, but limiting his "hopes to the present life, and thus becoming like the brutes." This interpretation Houbigant justifies, by a mere alteration of the punctuation in the original. Vide Houbigant. But there is scarcely any ambiguity of meaning, or difference of interpretation, as to the 14th & 15th verses, on which my argument depends. The Ethiopic, the Syriac and the Arabic versions all give the same sense. The Arabic is, if possible, more exclusively applicable to a future life in ver. 15: "But God will free my soul from the power of "the grave, when he shall receive it," i. e. my soul. Bishop Patrick, who was not sedulous to discover in the Old Testament indications of a future state, applies both these verses to the resurrection. But Horne's paraphrase is so strikingly beautiful, I cannot refrain from transcribing it. Ver. 14: "The high and mighty ones of the earth, who cause people to fear, and "nations to tremble around them, must one day crowd the grave; in multi-"tude and impotence, though not in innocence, resembling sheep driven and "confined by the butcher in his house of slaughter. There death, that "ravening wolf, shall feed sweetly on them, and devour his long-expected "prey in silence and darkness; until the glorious morning of the re-"surrection dawn, when the once oppressed and afflicted righteous, risen "from the dead, and sitting with their Lord in judgment, shall have the "dominion over their cruel enemies, whose faded beauty, withered strength, "and departed glory, shall display to men and angels, the vanity of that con-"fidence which is not placed in God."—Warburton interprets "*in the* "*morning*," to mean, "*by the judgment of the law*, which was administered "in the *morning hours*." What straits is a system driven to, to require such an interpretation!

"feed upon them, and the righteous shall have dominion over "them in the morning, and their beauty shall consume in the "grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul "from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me." Surely these expressions cannot be understood to denote any thing short of an *eternal deliverance* from the power of death, and a blessed reception into the presence of God.

I would here notice the remarkable verses in Psalm xxxvi.; where, speaking of those who put their trust in the Lord, the Psalmist declares, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the "fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the "river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life: "in thy light shall we see light." Warburton, strongly as this passage appears to indicate *eternal life sustained* by *that presence* which is the *fountain of life*, dismisses it with this *short* and *decisive* observation: "Here, to prove the immortality of man, "a text is produced, which teaches the eternity of GOD. But "I know some who think there is a necessary connexion be-"tween these two truths." It may perhaps be answered as shortly, that though there is no *general* necessary connexion between these two truths, yet if the Scripture asserts, not only that *God* is to *exist for ever*, but that man shall *witness* that eternal existence, *partaking* of that inexhaustible fountain of life which is with God; it is not *very far* from asserting that man himself will be also immortal.

The same sentiment observed in Psalm xlix. is more conspicuous in Psalm lxxiii. in which the author (whether David or Asaph* is not material in the present question, as they were cotemporary, † and equally prove that the sentiments which they express existed in the most pious and reflecting minds) chooses as his subject the worldly prosperity of the ungodly; the doubts and perplexities which this excited in his mind, as to the equal dealing of Divine Providence, until these doubts were dispelled by the lights which religion affords as to the final doom of the wicked, contrasted with the glory reserved for the good: "Then," says he, "thought I to know "this, but it was too painful for me; until I went into the "sanctuary of God: then understood I their end. Surely thou "didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down

* Vide 1 Chron.

† If, as Patrick thinks, this Psalm was composed by *Asaph the Seer*, it will belong to the days of Hezekiah.

"into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in "a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a "dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, "thou shalt despise their image." Such was the fate of the wicked; which going into the sanctuary, where religious reflections naturally suggested themselves, enabled him to appreciate in its true colours, and to contrast it with that blessing the pious author hoped himself to enjoy: "Nevertheless, I am "always with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive "me to glory."* How plain and strong the hope of eternal life, here expressed.

But the inspired author, enraptured at the thought, dwells on and exults in it: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and "there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh "and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, "and my portion for ever."

* I adopt here our Bible translation, as the most clear and accurate. Nothing seems more plain and decisive in asserting a future retribution. But Warburton dismisses this also, with his usual majestic brevity: "Thou shalt "guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory; or, as an "excellent critic has it, 'Consilio tuo deduxisti me, et postea cum gloria ex-"cepisti me,' Thou wast, or *shalt* be always present with me in difficulties "and distresses; and shalt lead and conduct me to better fortunes. This "literal sense the context requires." With great deference to this great critic (who was Le Clerc) I cannot help thinking that this, though adopted in *some* versions, is not the true literal sense; and that the context requires the direct contrary. How is it possible that the Psalmist should, in ver. 12—14, declare, That while the wicked increased in riches he should think his own innocency was in vain; because "all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning:" and without *intimating* that any sudden *change* in his own external situation had done away this difficulty, he declares that entering into the sanctuary had solved it; religion taught him a truer judgment. Was this merely to expect better fortunes in this life? A most poor and unworthy lesson for so sublime an instructress. But as I would also wish to shelter myself under critical authority, I would refer to the Rabbi David Kimchi who on ver. 17, remarks, "That the Psalmist "entering into the sanctuary, implies his entering by his reflections into that "world of spirits, where is retribution, where the just are to be dis-"criminated from the impious; and I there understood that we were formed "to a celestial more than an earthly life." And Taylor, "Then understood "I their (Ahharith) their future state after death: Surely thou hast set "them in slippery places, thou hast cast them down into eternal destruction. And ver. 20: "As a dream after one is awake, so, O Lord, when thou "awakest, (בעיר in awaking them, or when they are awakened) thou wilt "despise (debase, pour contempt, as Dan. xii. 2.) upon their image, their "vain, shadowy, unsubstantial condition." Vide Taylor, p. 103.—The 24th verse Hammond (whom Warburton so highly approves as an excellent critic and an orthodox divine, Div. Leg. Vol. iv. p. 153.) explains, "*afterwards* "*receive me to glory, that is to thyself.*" Vide also Calmet, Patrick, and Horne, Poli Synopsis, and Dodd's Notes.

Nor is Psalm ciii. less expressive of feelings, which no prospect of mere temporal blessings could excite; which impel the divine Psalmist to exclaim, "Praise the Lord, O my soul; and "all that is within me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, "O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." These benefits then the Psalmist, with a sublime fervor of gratitude, enumerates; but he dwells chiefly on such topics as an elevated soul anxiously looking forward to another life would most naturally select. He glances at temporal blessings, but he enlarges on the spiritual mercy of God."* "The Lord," says he, "is full "of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and of great good-"ness; he will not always be chiding; neither keepeth he his "anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; "nor rewarded us according to our wickedness. For look how "high the heaven is in comparison of the earth; so great is his "mercy also towards them that fear him. Look how wide also "the east is from the west; so far hath he set our sins from us."

This passage could scarcely have been dictated by any hope of mere temporal and momentary forgiveness; it is irreconcilable with the feelings of a mind which looked forward to annihilation and eternal death as the irreversible doom decreed against the sin of the first man, and still to be executed without any relaxation of its severity on all the human race. But to put this beyond all doubt, the Psalmist proceeds to contrast the divine mercy with the transitory and wretched life of man, when that mercy does not interpose: "Yea," says he, "like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord "merciful unto them that fear him. For he knoweth whereof "we are made; he remembereth that we are dust. The days "of man are but as grass; he flourisheth as a flower of the "field; for as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone, and "the place thereof shall know it no more. But the merciful good-"ness of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear "him, and his righteousness upon their children's children; even "upon such as keep his covenant, and think upon his com-

* The 4th verse, "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction," is in the original, "Who redeemeth thy life from *the pit*." And the Chaldee renders it, "Who redeemeth it from Gehenna." The Syriac and Arabic, "*From corruption*." The 5th verse, "Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's," is, by the Chaldee paraphrased, "*In the future world thou shalt renew thy youth "like the eagle*." But I rely on the general turn and spirit of the entire context, not on isolated, and perhaps ambiguous expressions. All the versions agree as to the literal meaning of the verses quoted in the text.

"mandments to do them." But it has been said, the expression of *righteousness upon children's children* shews the Psalmist had in his view nothing more than the continued protection of the posterity of the good in this world, according to the promise of the second commandment.* The very next verse refutes the degrading suggestion, and shews the views of the Psalmist were raised to a higher world: "The Lord," says he, "hath "prepared his seat in heaven; and his kingdom ruleth over all. "O praise the Lord, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength, "ye that fulfil his commandments, and hearken unto the voice "of his word. O praise the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye servants "of his that do his pleasure. O speak good of the Lord, all "ye works of his, in all places of his dominion: praise thou "the Lord, O my soul." Can we doubt whether the soul which breathed forth such praises as these, did not look forward to the society of these angels, whom it calls even now to join with one voice and one consent, to celebrate the universal goodness of their common God. These angels are combined with the servants of God, "that do his pleasure;" an expression exactly parallel to that of the Apostle, when he says, "Ye are "come to an heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable com-"pany of angels, to the general assembly of the first-born of "the church, which are written in heaven, and to God, the "judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."† Assuredly the mind of the holy Psalmist was exalted by the same ideas, and animated by the same hopes.

In Psalm cxv. after declaring the privilege of God's people over the idolatrous world, "That their God was in heaven, and "did whatsoever he pleased," but that the idols of the heathen "were silver and gold, the work of men's hands," dead, senseless and impotent; and that "they who make them shall be "like unto them, and all they that put their trust in them;" that is, they shall become dead and senseless as their idols, without any hopes of a renovation or restitution to a state of happiness: he proceeds to contrast this with the hopes and the blessings that awaited the people of God; which he plainly intimates will not be confined to the enjoyments of this transitory

* Vide Warburton, Vol. v. p. 156. This is the only expression of the Psalm which Warburton considers; thus entirely overlooking the tenour and context of the composition. Any system may be supported by such a mode of criticism.

† Heb. xii. 22, 23.

life, but extend to a future and eternal state: "You are the "blessed of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. The hea- "ven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath he "given to the children of men. The dead praise not the Lord, "neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the "Lord from this time forth for evermore." On which a judi- cious and learned critic observes,* "What can be the meaning "of the opposition here put between God's people and the "dead; and the one's not praising Jehovah, the other praising "him for ever? Could the Psalmist possibly mean their living "to praise him upon earth? The earth, he had told us just "before, was given to all the sons of Adam; and the Gentiles "lived upon it as long as the Jews, for any thing that appears to "the contrary. Could he mean that they should never undergo "the state of death? But this too could not be, for they died "as naturally and as soon perhaps as the heathens, and their "posterity must do the same, though it extended itself to a "thousand generations. What then is that discriminating bless- "ing here intended, that should distinguish the worshippers of "Jehovah, all those who feared the Lord, both small and "great, from the idol worshippers and contemners of Jehovah. "I freely own I can make no sense of this passage, otherwise "than by understanding the word *dead* of the heathen nations, "who having no part in God's covenant of redemption, but "being estranged from him by their idolatries and wickedness, "were to be left for ever in a state of death, so as never more "to rise, to happiness at least; while God's people, on the "other hand, hoped for a joyful resurrection, and a future "state of blessedness, wherein they should praise God for ever, "in the most extensive sense of that expression. There is no- "thing forced," continues the learned critic, "that I can per- "ceive, in this explication, taking with us the notion (so well "established by a very learned prelate†) that God's covenant "made, or rather renewed with Abraham and the Patriarchs, "implied in it a conquest over death, and a removal of that "curse denounced on Adam at the fall; and this notion stands "confirmed by our Saviour's reasoning in the Gospel, where "he exempts Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from amongst the

* Peters on Job, p. 223 to 226.

† Sherlock on Prophecy, Disc. V. particularly p. 112.

"*dead*, by virtue of God's covenant with them *to be their God*;
"and from thence, as from an unanswerable argument, proves
"a future resurrection."

I close this series of proofs—that a future state was almost perpetually in the contemplation of the holy Psalmist—with Psalm cxxxix. in which with such a divine penetration as nothing but an heaven-taught wisdom could inspire, he celebrates the all-seeing omniscience of his God, whom he describes as "about his path and about his bed, and spying out all his ways;
"acquainted with every word in his tongue long before." When he describes that Omnipresent Spirit, which fills the expanse of heaven, and penetrates to the recesses of hell, from whom no darkness can conceal, because the darkness is no darkness with him, but the night is as clear as the day; when he acknowledges that creative love by which he was fearfully and wonderfully made; when he exclaims, "How dear are thy counsels
"unto me, O God! yea, how great is the sum of them! If I
"tell them, they are more in number than the sand: when I
"awake up, I am present with thee;" what is the practical inference which the holy Psalmist deduces? It is nothing less than the destruction of the wicked, and the eternal happiness of the good, in which he expresses a firm confidence that he himself will share: "Wilt thou not slay the wicked, O God?
"Depart from me, ye bloodthirsty men." And thus he concludes: "Try me, O God, and search the ground of my heart;
"prove me, and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be
"any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

In the moral works of SOLOMON we find sufficient proofs that

* All the versions agree in translating the last words of this Psalm, "*the "way everlasting.*" Indeed the original will scarcely bear any other meaning; and it is opposed to the way of "*pain or grief*," (as we have it in the margin of our Bibles) which would make the sense still more expressly to indicate the eternal rewards of a future life, as opposed to its punishments. Yet I know not why, except from not observing this antithesis, and being led away by the translation of the first clause, as a *way of iniquity*; many of the best commentators have interpreted the second as the *way of piety and righteousness*, which alone is durable and eternal. But the word עִצָּב originally meaning "grief and pain," seems to be by a metaphor, only applied to idols and idolaters, as bringing misery on their worshippers; while עוֹלָם "eternity," is very seldom used in such a metaphorical sense. I cannot see why the more literal meaning of both should not be here preserved, the sense would be, *Look well if there be any way deserving of pain or punishment in me, and lead me in the way of eternity.*

he was certain of a future state of retribution, and felt its importance as the strongest sanction of virtue. The book of Proverbs, consisting chiefly of rules of prudence for the direction of human conduct, so as to obtain prosperity in the present life, does not so frequently afford occasion for directly enforcing the doctrine of a future state; but in many places it is plainly intimated, and in some directly asserted.

When in chap. iv. the preacher exhorts "Enter not into the "paths of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men;" he enforces this admonition by declaring, "the path of the just "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the "perfect day; but the way of the wicked is as darkness, they "know not at what they stumble." * Words beautifully expressing the reward of virtue, increasing from day to day, until it terminates in endless glory; and the terrors of conscience, which incessantly disturb the guilty.

In chap. viii. after celebrating the praises of Wisdom, which the Lord possessed in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, even from everlasting, she is introduced solemnly calling on all the sons of men: "Now therefore hearken unto me, O "ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. For "whoso findeth me, findeth *life*, and shall obtain favour of the "Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own "soul: all they that hate me love *death*." These words can scarcely signify any thing less than the destruction brought upon the soul by *death eternal*. But this is still more clearly asserted to be the punishment of yielding to the seductions of the adulteress and the harlot; whose house the royal Preacher describes as "the way to hell, going down to the chambers "of death." And again, when she saith to the dupe of her vice, "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret "is pleasant;" the Preacher adds, But he knoweth not that the "dead are there, and that her guests are in the depth of hell." While in chap. xii. 28, we are told, "In the way of righteous-"ness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is *no death*." Thus again, in chap. xiv. we are assured that "The fear of the "Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

* Prov. iv. 18, 19. This passage is noticed by Warburton. There is no difference of interpretation as to the words quoted, and many of the most reputable commentators give them the same sense as I do here: as Mercerus, Glassius, Baynus, Patrick, Dodd. Vide Poli Synopsis, &c.

And still more expressly we are assured, that "The wicked is "driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope "in his death." * And the contrary fate of the wicked is expressed with equal clearness, in ch. xxi. 16: "The man that "wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall remain "in the congregation of the dead," that is, (as Patrick explains it) "shall be sent down to hell, confined to the company of the "old giants, who, giving themselves up to violence and de-"bauchery, were swept away by the Deluge." And by a similar sanction doth the royal Preacher enforce his beautiful exhortation to active benevolence, chap. xxiv. 11: "If thou "forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and ready "to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not "he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth "thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to "every man according to his works?" And immediately after, "When thou hast found wisdom, there shall be a reward, and "thy expectation shall not be cut off." †

But if the doctrine of a future retribution is only *incidentally* mentioned in the book of Proverbs, it forms the *great basis* and the leading truth of the book of Ecclesiastes. In this the royal Preacher expatiates on the transitory condition of mankind, if considered as confined to the present state of existence; the vanity and vexation of spirit attending all present human enjoyment, which his own experience had so abundantly proved; the apparent inequality of Providence, except under the Jewish dispensation, by which there appears one event to the righteous and the wicked. "This," says he, "is an evil among all things "that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all;

* Prov. xiv. 32. "Hath hope in his death," i. e. says Warburton, "the "righteous hath hope, that he shall be delivered *from* the most imminent "dangers. So the Psalmist, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver "their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." But to me no ideas seem more different than having *hope in* death, and hope to escape *from* death; except *in* and *from* are taken as synonymous and convertible prepositions, which they certainly are not in Hebrew more than in English.

† Warburton interprets Prov. xi. 7, "When a wicked man dieth, his ex-"pectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth," combined with the verse now quoted, to apply merely to the expectation of wicked men, to establish a *house* in *their posterity*; which expectation would deceive them; and to the expectation of wise and virtuous men in the success of their honest endeavours, which should not deceive them. Now to me it seems the former passage must imply a much more serious disappointment, the latter a much higher reward. But other passages already quoted appear sufficiently clear. Vide Warburton, Vol. v. 157.

"yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and mad-"ness is in their heart while they live, and after that they "go down to the dead." * But in all the difficulties and perplexities, all that vanity and vexation of spirit, which this partial view of human nature implies, the royal Preacher brings forward the prospect of a future life and just retribution, as the solution and the remedy, the consolation and the cure. † In chap. iii. he tells us, "I know that whatsoever God doeth,

* Eccles. ix. 3.

† The ingenious and learned Desvoeux, in his Dissertation, Comment and Paraphrase on the Book of Ecclesiastes, has so clearly proved the scope of it to have been the enforcement of a future life, that I need only refer to his Work. He also points out the misinterpretations of Warburton. Vide his Dissertation, ch. ii. sect. iii. particularly p. 72, compared with Warburton, Vol. iv. p. 158.—Those who have not Desvoeux's Work, may be pleased to see his view of this very important part of Scripture. "The author's "design," says he, "is to prove the immortality of the soul, or rather the "necessity of another state after this life, from such arguments as may be "afforded by reason and experience; and his whole discourse may be re-"duced to three propositions, every one of which, when properly reflected "upon, yields a strong proof of a future state of rewards and punishments. "First, No labour or trouble of men in this world can ever be so profitable "as to produce in them a lasting contentment and thorough satisfaction "of mind. Secondly, Earthly goods, and whatever we can acquire by our "utmost trouble and labour in this world, are so far from making us "lastingly happy, that they may be even looked on as real obstacles to our "ease, quiet, and tranquillity. Thirdly, Men know not what is or is not truly "advantageous to them; because they are either ignorant or unmindful of "that which must come to pass after they are dead; therefore any one may "conclude, that there must be a state of true and solid happiness for men; "except God, who is allowed to have made them what they are, to have im-"planted in their hearts that strong desire of happiness which often makes "them unhappy in this world, and to have the absolute command of their "fate, be absurdly supposed to have acted whimsically in their formation, "and to act so still in the dispensation of providence. Thus from all these "propositions, but especially the last, the Preacher infers, that we must seek "for happiness beyond the grave." This scheme the learned author supports, by an accurate analysis of the entire work. Vide his Dissertation, chap. iii. Vide also Patrick's Preface, which, as to my present argument, is equally conclusive; and Poli Synopsis. Should it be objected, that this system supposes an unequal providence in Solomon's reign, contrary to the declaration of the Mosaic Law, I answer, no such inference can be drawn. Solomon had, in consequence of his father's fidelity and his own early piety, enjoyed the highest temporal prosperity; this had corrupted his mind, seduced him into vice, and involved him in disappointment and calamity, which were the present consequences and punishment of his offences. But this whole series of events operated not only to convince him, that God had punished his own abuse of temporal prosperity; but that all such prosperity was in its own nature inadequate to the aspirings of an immortal spirit, which ought to seek its happiness in the rewards of another life, to be secured only by the constant fear of God and obedience to his laws. Besides, we cannot but suppose that Solomon's views were enlarged, to consider the general state, conduct, and prospects of mankind, even beyond the precincts of the Jewish state, and the sanctions of the Jewish Law.

"it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing "taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before "him." Having thus asserted the uniformity and consistency of the divine conduct, he contrasts them with the perversion of right by human guilt; and declares this can only be rectified by the righteous judgment of God: "And moreover, I saw under "the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; "and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. I "said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the "wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose, and for "every work."

In chap. viii. ver. 11, he remarks, "Because sentence against "an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart "of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." He adds, "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be "prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them "that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well "with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are "as a shadow; because he feareth not before God." Evidently denoting, that present impunity, during the longest life, is as a shadow only, compared with that future duration through which the punishment of the wicked shall extend. And in chap. xi. is this remarkable passage; "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; "and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and "walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: "but know, that for all these things God will bring thee into "judgment." And finally, to prove a future state of retribution was the object he held out, through the entire of his exhortation, as the only adequate sanction of virtue, the only sure prop of religion; and eternal happiness the only rational object of human pursuit; he closes this admirable work with a solemn admonition. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, "while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when "thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Then, after describing, with singular beauty and philosophic precision, the symptoms of decay preceding that awful hour, when, as he expresses it, "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the "spirit shall return unto God who gave it;" he imprints upon the heart of his reader, that great truth, which it was his chief object to promulgate and enforce; "Let us hear the conclusion "of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments:

"for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every "work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it "be good, or whether it be evil." *

The great truth of a day of divine judgment and strict retribution, was thus clearly promulgated by the royal Preacher, whose distinguished glory as a monarch, and unparalleled wisdom as a sage, must have excited the greatest attention to his instructions, amongst all his countrymen. But it seems to have been the intention of Providence to impress the conviction that the soul survived death, and that man was capable of a blessed immortality, by miraculous facts as well as by inspired instructions. This must have been the effect of those three great instances of resurrection from the dead, produced by the miraculous power of Elijah and Elisha, the most illustrious of the Jewish Prophets: first, the son of the widow of Zarephath, whom Elijah revived immediately after he had expired; † secondly, the son of the Shunamite, whom Elisha restored to life, after he had been dead for a considerable length of time, even during the journey of his mother from Shunem to Carmel, to implore the Prophet's aid, and their return; ‡ and lastly, the resurrection of the man who was bearing to his burial, and who, on being let down into the sepulchre of Elijah, revived. § Each of these facts rose above the preceding, both in the public notoriety of the event, and the magnitude of the miraculous interposition. In addition to these facts, the glorious translation of Elijah to heaven, so sublimely described by the sacred historian, when "there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted "them both (that is, Elijah and Elisha) asunder; and Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, "and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and "the horses of Israel. And he saw him no more." ‖ These miracles, combined with others of a different kind wrought by the same Prophets, which must have excited general attention, could not fail of impressing extensively and deeply on the Jewish nation, the opinions of the soul's surviving death, and being capable of a blessed immortality. And in the writings of the subsequent Prophets we find these truths introduced sometimes in metaphor and scenic description as familiar to the minds of

* Ecclesiastes, two last verses. † 1 Kings xvii.
‡ 2 Kings iv. § Ibid. xiii. 21. ‖ Ibid ii. 11, 12.

the Jewish people, and sometimes directly revealed and authoritatively enforced, to support the interests of virtue and the sacredness of religion.

I select a few instances from the energetic and sublime Isaiah. How awful the description of the destruction which was to await the king of Babylon; which, though as cenic and metaphorical description, could not but suggest the idea and impress the belief of a future state; or rather indeed proves such ideas and such a conviction were perfectly familiar both to the Prophet and his readers: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to "meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, "even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from "their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall "speak, and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we "are? art thou become like unto us?" * In chap. xxv. the Prophet describes the faithfulness of God in executing his menaces on the wicked, and his promises of salvation to the faithful, in terms which in their full meaning are applicable only to the great day of final retribution, however they may in a more confined sense have been fulfilled by antecedent and temporal judgments: "O Lord," says the Prophet, "thou art my God; I will "exalt thee, I will praise thy name: for thou hast done won-"derful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." And then, after describing the vengeance of God on his enemies, he proceeds to describe the salvation of the faithful: "And he "will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast "over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will "wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his "people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord "hath spoken it." †

* Isaiah xiv. 9 & 10.

† In Lowth's beautiful translation, the idea of an immortal state is still more clearly expressed, ch. xxv. 8.

He shall utterly destroy death for ever;
And the Lord JEHOVAH shall wipe away the tear from off all faces.
And the reproach of his people shall he remove from off the whole earth:
For JEHOVAH hath spoken it.

And on verse 6, Lowth remarks, "The feast here spoken of, is to be "celebrated on Mount Sion, and all the people without distinction are to be "invited to it; this can be no other than the celebration of the establishment "of Christ's kingdom, which is frequently represented in the Gospel, under "the image of a feast; where 'many shall come from the East and West,

In chap. xxvi. the Prophet pursues the same subject, in terms which yet more directly suggest the resurrection at the last day: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls "and bulwarks. Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body "shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; "for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast "out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy cham-"bers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were "for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, "behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inha-"bitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall "disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."*

"and shall sit down at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom "of heaven.' Matth. viii. 11. Luke xiv. 16, and xxii. 29. This sense is "fully confirmed by the concomitants of this feast, expressed in the next "verse, the removing the vail from the face of all nations; and the abolition "of death. The first of which is obviously and clearly explained of the "preaching of the Gospel. And the second must mean the blessing of im-"mortality procured for us by Christ, who hath 'abolished death, and "through death hath destroyed him that had the power of death.'"

* Isaiah xxvi. 1, 19, 20, 21. Lowth's translation of these last verses is somewhat different, though, for the purpose I adduce them, not materially: ver. 10.

Thy dead shall live, my deceased they shall rise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;
For thy dew is as the dew of the dawn,
But the earth shall cast forth as an abortion, the deceased tyrants.

And ver. 21.

For behold, Jehovah issueth forth from his place,
To punish for his iniquity the inhabitant of the earth.
And the earth shall disclose the blood that is upon her,
And shall no longer cover her slain.

On this passage Lowth remarks: "The deliverance of the people of God "from a state of the lowest depression, is explained by images plainly taken "from the resurrection of the dead. In the same manner the Prophet Eze-"kiel represents the restoration of the Jewish nation from a state of utter "desolation, by the restoring of the dry bones to life, exhibited to him in a "vision, chap. xxxvii. which is directly thus applied and explained, ver. 11; "and this deliverance is expressed with a manifest opposition to what is here "said above, ver. 14, of the great lords and tyrants under whom they had "groaned:

They are dead, they shall not live;
They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise.

"That they should be destroyed utterly, and should never be restored to "their former power and glory. It appears from hence, that the doctrine of "the resurrection of the dead was at that time a common and popular doc-"trine: for an image which is assumed, in order to express or represent "another in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophe-"tical, must be an image commonly known and understood, otherwise it "will not answer the purpose for which it is asumed."

In chap. xxxiii. how awfully does the Prophet describe the judgments of God! "Hear ye that are far off, what I have "done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The "sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hy- "pocrites: who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring "fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burn- "ings?* He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; "he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands "from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of "blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell "on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: "bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." And in verse 22, the ground of this confidence is emphatically described: "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord "is our king; he will save us."

In chap. li. the Prophet illustrates the abolition of the Jewish economy and the introduction of the new, by images which bespeak a mind familiarized to the contemplation of that grand catastrophe which shall close the existence of this sublunary world: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the "earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, "and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that "dwell thereon shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall "be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished. Hear- "ken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose "heart is my Law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither "be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them

Here I find the Bishop of Killala makes no material change in Lowth's translation; but the learned Prelate in the next chapter notices a circumstance very opposite to my present argument: chap. xxvii.

"In that day,
"Shall Jehovah punish with his grievous sword,
"His great and strong sword,
"Leviathan the mailed serpent,
"Even Leviathan the writhing serpent;
"And he shall slay the monster that is in the sea."

On this the Bishop remarks: that whatever present adversary is designed "here, by the name of Leviathan, whether the king of Egypt or Babylon; "it seems highly probable that a future spiritual enemy is in contemplation, "even the old serpent, whose final destiny is related, Rev. xx. 10."

* Lowth translates the 14th verse: "Who among us can abide this con- "suming fire, who among us can abide these continued burnings?" Ver. 11 to 22, Lowth remarks, is a description of the dreadful apprehensions of the wicked, in those times of distress and imminent danger, finely contrasted with the confidence and security of the righteous, and their trust in the promises of God, that he will be their never-failing strength and protector.

" up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: " but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation " from generation to generation."*

I close the extracts from this truly evangelic Prophet, with chap. lvii. in which he describes, in terms the most clear and impressive, that strict retribution by which divine justice will correct all the inequalities of the present life, and render to every man according to his works: " The righteous perisheth, and no " man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, " none considering that the righteous is taken away from the " evil to come.† He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in " their beds, each one walking in his uprightness. For thus " saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose " name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him " also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit " of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. " But the wicked are like the troubled sea, whose waters cast " up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the " wicked."

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the minor Prophets, occupied as they chiefly are, in denouncing the temporal judgments immediately to be inflicted on the Jews, first by the dispersion of the ten tribes, and afterwards by the Babylonish captivity, recur to the remote ideas of a future state less frequently than the great evangelic Prophet, who constantly extends his view to the glories and the effects of the Messiah's reign. Yet they frequently speak of Jehovah as recompensing all the inhabitants of the earth, whether nations or individuals, according to their deeds; and of the great and terrible day of the Lord; and of men's delivering their souls from death; in terms which are properly applicable only to the great day of final retribution. Thus Jeremiah, in

* Lowth's translation is here much more accurate and expressive: " But " my righteousness shall endure for ever, and my salvation to the age of " ages."

† Lowth is more accurate, and equally expressive of the sentiment which this passage appears to me to impress:

" The righteous man is taken away because of the evil;
" He shall go in peace, he shall rest in his bed,
" Even the perfect man, he that walketh in the straight path."

Bishop Stock remarks, that " in verse 19, the words, Peace to the distant " and to the near, saith Jehovah, means, to the Gentiles as well as Jews. In " this universal peace the wicked shall have no share." I would add, this universal peace, excluding all the wicked, can scarcely be conceived strictly true but of that world " wherein shall dwell righteousness."

chap. xvii. declares, "The heart is deceitful above all things; "who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, "even to give to every man according to his ways, and accord- "ing to the fruit of his doings."* And again, "He that get- "teth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of "his days, and at his end shall be a fool."† And again, "O "Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, "and they that depart from me shall be *written in* the earth; "because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living "waters."

Thus Ezekiel, in the vision of the valley of dry bones, chap. xxxvii. gives a scenical representation of the restoration of the dead hope of Israel, by the restoration of these bones to life: "Then said he unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole "house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and "our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore pro- "phesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, "O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come "up out of your graves, and bring you unto the land of Israel."‡ Thus also Hosea, encouraging Israel to obedience by the pros- pect of deliverance from the calamities which God would inflict on them for their crimes, if they should truly repent; in chap.

* Blayney observes, the Prophet contrasts the accursed condition of him that resteth his trust on man, ver. 5. 8. He sheweth that, be the human heart ever so wily, God can detect, and will finally punish its double deal- ing, ver. 9, 11. He acknowledgeth that sure salvation cometh from God, and from God only.

† Blayney reads, "felon," that is, "he shall have the reward of a felon at "last, or shall be brought to condign punishment. This is directly opposite "to what Balaam wished, Numb. xxiii. 10, and what every wise man would "wish for himself, a latter end like that of the righteous." If this observa- tion is just, the Prophet, by the *last end* of the irreligious, means their fu- ture state; which, according to Taylor, is the exact force of the word אחריתו here used. The Chaldee paraphrase renders the words "shall be written in earth," by *falling into Gehenna.*

‡ Primate Newcome, in his note on the 12th verse of this chapter, ob- serves: "In the land of their captivity, the Jews seemed as absolutely de- "prived of their own country, as persons committed to the grave are cut off "from the living. The foregoing similitude shewed in a strong and beautiful "manner, that God, who could even raise the dead, had power to restore "them." Having been led to recur to the Works of this truly learned and Christian divine, I cannot forbear expressing the fond and grateful remem- brance which must ever remain imprinted on my heart, of a man, whose encou- ragement animated, whose advice guided, my earliest studies, and in whose friendship (terminated alas! only by his death) I received the most honor- able reward. But he is gone in peace—he rests in glory; though dead, his example and his works still speak to the living; and Oh! "may we die the death of "the righteous, and may our last end be like his."

xiii. calls on them: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but "in me is thine help. * I will ransom them from the power of "the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will "be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction: repent-"ance shall be hid from mine eyes."

Joel, with all the energy and sublimity of Isaiah himself, predicts the wonderful effusion of divine grace under the Gospel scheme; and passes on to describe the signs that should precede, and the terrors that should attend, the coming of the day of judgment, that great and terrible day of the Lord: "And I "will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood and "fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into dark-"ness; and the moon into blood, before the great and the ter-"rible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be de-"livered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, shall be deli-"verance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the "Lord shall call."†

Amos also first describes the temporal sanctions of the Mosaic law, and their exact distribution by the immediate hand of God, who "caused it to rain upon one city, and not to rain upon "another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece where-"upon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered "unto one city to drink water; but they were not satisfied: "yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have "overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Go-"morrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burn-

* This verse is otherwise, and, as it seems to me, more accurately rendered by Primate Newcome:

"Yet I will redeem thee from the grave,
"I will deliver thee from death.
"O death, where is thine overthrow!
"O grave, where is thy destruction!
"Repenting is hidden from mine eyes.

"i. e." says Newcome, "change of purpose, my veracity being concerned." And he remarks, that "St. Paul naturally applies to the resurrection of the dead, what the Prophet says of future national happiness." Admitting the Prophet means only this, we have here a very strong instance how distinct and familiar was the idea of a resurrection to the Prophet and his countrymen.

† Joel ii. 30. Primate Newcome understands this passage, of the events which took place at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. But from our Saviour's language, Matt. xxiv. 29, we are certainly warranted in applying them also to the day of general judgment.

"ing; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."* He then proceeds to point out that great day of judgment, the prospect of which ought to restrain, as its punishment would assuredly chastise, the obstinacy of their guilt: "Therefore thus "will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto "thee, PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O ISRAEL. For lo! he "that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and de-"clareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morn-"ing darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, "The LORD GOD of Hosts is his name."

Nahum, with equal sublimity, describes the vengeance of God in terms applicable only to the general judgment on all the inhabitants of the earth: "He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it "dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and "Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The moun-"tains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt "at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. "Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in "the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, "and the rocks are thrown down by him. The Lord is good— "a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them "that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will "make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall "pursue his enemies."†

Finally, I close this series of prophetical denunciations of the great day of final retribution, with the distinct and awful description of it by the Prophet Daniel.

"I beheld," says the Prophet, "till the thrones were cast "down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was "white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; "his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning "fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him; "thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand "times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, "and the books were opened." And again, "I saw in the "night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with "the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and "they brought him near before him. And there was given him "dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations,

* Amos iv. 7, 8, & 11. † Nahum i. 4—8.

" and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlast-
" ing dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom
" that which shall not be abolished."*

And at the conclusion of this wonderful and solemn prophecy, in the last chapter of Daniel; "And at that time shall Michael " stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of " thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as was " never since there was a nation, even to that time: and at that " time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be " found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in " the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, " and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that " be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and " they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and " ever."†

Thus clearly do the Jewish Prophets promulgate that truth, so plainly declared by another inspired writer, who probably did not live under the Jewish dispensation, and who, at a much earlier period, proclaimed the same awful doctrine, even the Patriarch Job, who, with all the solemnity which its importance required, demands for it the attention of mankind, when he exclaims,‡ "O that my words were now written, that they " were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron

* Dan. vii. 9, 10, and 13, 14.

† Ibid. xii. 1—3.

‡ Job, xix. 23—27. That this passage of Job really means the redemption of the just at the last day, has been abundantly proved by many writers, in opposition not only to Warburton, but to Grotius and Le Clerc. Vide particularly the notes of the very learned Schultens, and of Peters. The ancient origin of the book has also, as appears to me, been abundantly proved by many writers, but by none more ably than by my learned friend Dr. Magee, in his work on Atonement and Sacrifice. I think it unnecessary to dwell longer on this subject, the argument on which has already swelled far beyond my original intention. I would only remark, that notwithstanding his laboured dissertation, Warburton appears to have entertained some doubt, as to the validity of the proofs he had given of the modern date of this book. Since if this was certain, it was *unnecessary* for him to maintain, that this passage was to be understood only of a future *temporal* deliverance of the Jews. For nothing could justify such a forced interpretation, but the supposition that the author lived at a period when the idea of a future life had never been entertained (if such a period can be assigned.) If, on the contrary, Job was written about the close of the Babylonish Captivity, as Warburton contends, it is quite certain, and even admitted by himself, that the ideas of a future life and retribution were then familiar to the Jews; and there would remain no possible reason for suspecting they were not familiar to and plainly expressed by the supposed author of the Book of Job.

"pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my "Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day "upon the earth. And *though* after my skin *worms** destroy "this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see "for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; "though my reins be consumed within me."

We have now traced the gradual promulgation of the great doctrine of a future retribution, from the first gracious intimation of final deliverance from the power of Satan, vouchsafed at the fall, to its full disclosure by David and Solomon, and its

* Our translation introduces the word "worms" in this verse unnecessarily; it may be more closely and clearly translated, "And that even I, "after my skin is consumed, shall in my flesh behold my God." This is Houbigant's version, with which Schultens and Peters nearly agree.

I have been much gratified at finding that a very learned writer confirms the exposition I had given * of the expressions used by the Jewish lawgiver, in the history of the Creation, when he declared that God said, "Let us "make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let him have domin- "ion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the "cattle, and over all the earth." After clearly proving that this *image* included reason, which qualified man for that dominion with which he was vested, he proceeds to observe: "But now the substance in which the "faculty of reason resides, could not be a material substance, as the best "philosophy evinceth.† Man, therefore, must needs consist of an imma- "terial substance, joined to a material: or, in other words, he must be a "compound of soul and body. And this seems to be intimated, and not "obscurely neither, by the words of the text: 'The Lord God formed MAN "of the DUST OF THE GROUND, and breathed into his nostrils THE BREATH "OF LIFE, and man became A LIVING SOUL.' By the words the breath of "life, and a living soul, which discriminate LIFE in man from LIFE in brutes, "we are not to understand immateriality simply; since all animals, as we "say, have this in common; but the CONTINUANCE of LIFE after the separa- "tion of the compound, in virtue of man's *rationality*, which making him "responsible for his actions, may, according to the different parts in God's "moral economy, require *that* separate *existence*."

The learned author afterwards remarks, that "the place which points out "this difference, is made to serve for an introduction to the history of the "*free gift of immortality*. And a better cannot be conceived than that "which teacheth us, that the subject on whom this gift was bestowed, is, "by the immateriality of his physical nature, capable of enjoying it; and, by "the freedom of his reasonable nature, accountable for the abuse of it. So "much is observed in honor of that exquisite knowledge with which the "sacred writer was endowed." The reader will perhaps be surprised as much as I was, at discovering that the learned writer now quoted is no other than WARBURTON HIMSELF; the identical Warburton who had so strenuously maintained that *in all the writings of Moses* not so much as an *intelligible hint of a future state* was to be found. The passage now quoted occurs in the ninth book ‡ of the Divine Legation, written many years after the first six, and which though printed, so far as it goes, by the author,

* Vide supra, p. 291.

† Alluding to Clarke and Baxter.

‡ Vide Vol. III. pp. 620 and 621 of Warburton's Works, in seven volumes 4to. printed 1788.

solemn enforcement and impressive description by the last prophets. And we are thus, I trust, fully prepared to receive and admit the clear truth and full force of our divine Lord's declaration, that the Jews derived the knowledge of this truth from the Scriptures of the Old Testament; when appealing to them for the prophetic attestation of his own divine mission, he

was left unfinished, and not published until after his death. It is however not unfair to conclude, that *hints of a future state* which were *unintelligible* to him, while he saw only through the medium of his own system, became intelligible (as they must, I think, be to all others) when that mist was gradually removed. But while I make this remark, I am fully conscious of the possibility that variations and inconsistencies may be found in my own pages; though I sincerely hope truth is the great object of my pursuit. I therefore impute not to Warburton any deliberate neglect of that sacred principle; I would rather claim for him, as well as for myself, the old privilege of authors—

"Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum."

I have not judged it necessary in this argument to notice particularly the different texts which Warburton brings to shew, "That his conclusion may "be proved, not only from the silence of the sacred writers, but from their "positive declarations; in which they plainly discover, that there was no "popular expectation of a future state or a resurrection."* If the numerous passages alleged in this work to prove the *contrary*, are fairly interpreted, these positive declarations shewing the expectation of a future state, cannot be done away by any texts from the same authors, which speak of death as the period of existence, or the grave as the land of forgetfulness, &c. &c.; for these all may be obviously and easily interpreted as meaning no more than that death closes our *present* state of existence, puts an end to our *present* projects, prevents us from declaring in the *present* world the faithfulness of God, &c. &c.; or at the utmost, that so long as the state of death continues, until men are raised from the dead and called to judgment, they remain *insensible*,† an opinion held by many *Christians*. And in some instances these texts seem to be opinions which the sacred writers suppose pronounced by irreligious or atheistical objectors, and which they afterwards expressly refute; or vehement exclamations of recent sorrow reducing the mind almost to despair. It is worthy of remark, that the Sadducees‡ alleged the same texts to prove the same conclusion, yet our Lord charges them with *not knowing the Scriptures;* an assertion which surely should warn us against arguing from the Scriptures in the same manner which they did. Nor is the declaration of St. Paul less express, as to what he conceived to be the real tenor of the Law and the Prophets on this subject; "This," says he to Felix, "I confess unto thee, that after the way "which they call heresy, worship I the God of my fathers; believing all "things which are written in the Law and the Prophets: and have hope "towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I "exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence both toward "God and toward men." Acts xxiv. 14—16.

* Vide Div. Leg. Book v. Sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 353.

† Vide the Appendix to Bishop Law's Theory of Religion.

‡ Vide Menasse Ben Israel, as quoted by the learned David Humphreys, in his Essay on the Notions of the Jews concerning the Resurrection, p. 89; in which the texts adduced by the Sadducees are quoted and considered.

calls on his hearers, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think "ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* And though the disquisition which this inquiry has produced, has swelled to an unexpected length, I trust this will be excused, from its obvious tendency to vindicate the truth and illustrate the connexion of both revelations.

* John, v. 39.

LECTURE V.

EFFECTS OF JUDAISM ON THE GENTILES.

SECT. I.—*Objection to Judaism, first from its being confined to a single nation—Secondly, from its implying mutability in God, as being opposed to Christianity—Answer to the first—Judaism not confined in its effects to one nation—but intended, through the instrumentality of the Jews, to enlighten mankind—This effect foreseen and attended to in the Jewish scheme—Various instances to shew this—Solomon's prayer at the consecration of the temple establishes the same inference—The miracles wrought for the Jews made a strong impression on the Egyptians—On the Canaanites—On the Philistines—On the Heathens in the reign of Solomon—But counteracted by the principles of Idolatry—Instanced in the history of the Samaritans—Who were however prepared by Judaism for Christianity—Effects produced by Judaism on the Heathens during the Captivity—Instanced in the history of Jeremiah—Of Daniel—Of his three friends—Of Belshazzar—Of Cyrus—These facts publicly attested—Importance of such attestations—Traces of these effects in the East—Traces of the same effects in the religion of Zoroaster—Of Mahomet—Recapitulation—Universal reformation not to be expected at that period of the world—Objection derived from partial effects of Judaism, erroneous in its statement of facts—Inconclusive in reasoning—A revelation not being universal, implies no injustice in God.*

EXODUS ix. 16.

"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

IT yet remains to observe, that the Jewish system has been objected to, on grounds distinct from its immediate doctrines, or its direct effects upon the Jews themselves. First, as being *partial*; wholly confined to one obscure and insignificant nation, and therefore unworthy of a divine interposition, and inadequate to that stupendous apparatus of miracles by which it is supposed to have been introduced: Secondly, as indicating a capricious mutability on the part of God, who (as those objectors affirm) first promulgated the Mosaic Law as of eternal obligation; and yet afterwards is supposed to have abrogated it, and introduced the different and even opposite system of Christianity.

To these objections it is answered, first, that the Jewish scheme was never intended merely for the benefit of the Jews alone, but by their instrumentality for the benefit of all mankind, whose instruction and reformation it had the clearest tendency to promote, by exhibiting the most striking proofs of the existence and power of the true God, not only to the Jews themselves, but to all the nations placed in their vicinity or affected by their fortunes; amongst whom were the Egyptians the wisest, the Canaanites the most warlike, and the Phœnicians the most commercial nations of remote antiquity; and afterwards the four great empires of Assyria and Persia, Greece and Rome, which successively swayed the sceptre of the civilized world. So that whatever knowledge of true religion was preserved amongst mankind, was in all probability principally derived from this source, or at least was from thence materially extended and improved.*

A still more decided proof, that the Jewish scheme was de-

* That the Jewish Constitution was adapted to attract the attention and improve the religious knowledge of mankind, from the particular time at which it was introduced, has been satisfactorily evinced by a late ingenious writer.* He observes, "had it been erected at a period nearer to the Deluge, whether during the time while the light from the old world, shed "upon the survivors of that catastrophe, remained inextinguished, or during "the darkness and barbarism that succeeded it, it does not seem that the "period would have been (at least to human judgment) so wisely chosen. It "would have been superfluous while men remained under the deep and "recent impressions of the Deluge; and to the uninformed and inobservant "minds of their successors, who were sinking into barbarism, it would have "been lost, like a spectacle exhibited to the blind or the careless: and even "had its benefits been extended to all mankind, the number would have been "then (comparatively at least) but few. But not being erected until men "were multiplied and divided into separate communities, some of them "grown up into some considerable magnitude, and to some good degree of "improvement in powers and knowledge, it had, for the effectual exhibition "of God's moral government, the advantage of being presented before "many and qualified observers capable of apprehending such a truth, of "being gratified, or at least struck, with an easy proof and a conspicuous "display of it. Beginning after the commencement of such nations as Ba"bylon, Syria, Persia, and Egypt; continuing during the progress of these "nations through various conditions and vicissitudes, and unavoidably having "some connexion with them, because settled in the midst of them, and "some share in the changes which took place amongst them, the circum"tances of the Jewish nation, and their correspondence with its character, "and its observance and neglect of its peculiar constitution, could not but "be well known to those nations; it must have exhibited an experimental, "obvious, and clear proof of the moral government of God, a spectacle "attracting their attention through all the stages of civil society, and all "the different conditions incident to such combinations of men."

* Mr. Cappe, Vol. ii p. 208.

signed for and subservient to the general benefit of mankind, is derived from that great feature of it which supplies the answer to the second objection; even this: That there has been no change in the divine purposes, and no inconsistency between the Jewish and Christian dispensations; but that the Mosaic Law was from the first intended not to be of eternal obligation, but declared to be subservient to and introductory of the Gospel.

In order to establish the tendency of the Jewish economy to promote amongst other nations the knowledge of the true God, it is important to remark, that to produce such a tendency is expressly pointed out as part of the divine plan, and as a motive frequently influencing the measures of the divine dispensations. Thus the Jewish Legislator represents God as declaring concerning Pharaoh, "In very deed for this cause have I raised "thee up, to show in thee my power; and that my name may "be declared throughout all the earth."* And when on the impious rebellion of the Jews, after the return of the twelve spies, God proposes to destroy this ungovernable race, and raise from his faithful servant Moses a nation greater and mightier than they, the patriotic Legislator, in deprecating the execution of the divine menace, employs this topic as the most powerful dissuasive: "Now if thou shalt kill this people as one man, "then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, "saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people "unto the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath "slain them in the wilderness."† He then proceeds to entreat, that the long suffering mercy of God may now be exercised: "And the Lord said, Behold I have pardoned according to thy "word; but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with "the glory of the Lord."‡ The awful sentence is then pronounced, that the nation shall continue forty years in that wilderness, until "all the men of that evil generation should

* Exod. ix. 16. † Numb. xiv. 15.

The same motive is represented as constantly operating to prevail upon Jehovah to withhold the full punishment in justice due to the crimes of this wayward people. Thus in his last solemn hymn, in which the Lawgiver exhibits a prophetic sketch of the entire dealing of God with his people; after enumerating the signal punishments which would follow their apostacies, he adds, Deut. xxxii. 26, 27, "I would scatter them into corners, I "would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men. Were "it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should "behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, "and the Lord hath not done all this."

‡ Numb. xiv. 20, 21.

perish there:" a sentence the miraculous execution of which undoubtedly did, and still does, exhibit in the strongest light the power and justice of Jehovah to all the nations of the earth.

Thus again, when the Legislator labours to impress upon his countrymen the observance of the divine laws, he urges a similar motive: "Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wis-"dom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which "shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation "is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there "so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our "God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what "nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so "righteous, as all this Law which I set before you this day." * And certainly the wonders of divine power wrought in behalf of the Jewish people, combined with the character of the Jewish Law, justify this appeal of the Jewish Legislator to all nations acquainted with these awful facts. And how extensively has the knowledge of these facts been disseminated, how perpetually is it still spreading, through all the civilized regions of the globe.

Thus again, when the Legislator, with that spirit of prophecy which so strongly attests his divine mission, declares to his nation the prosperity which should reward their obedience, and the calamities which should chastise their transgressions, he states that both would be so signal as to attract the attention of the neighbouring countries, and evince to them the greatness of Jehovah: "The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto "himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou wilt keep the "commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. "And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called "by the name of the Lord: and they shall be afraid of thee. "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the "voice of the Lord thy God, all these curses shall overtake "thee; and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and "a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee; "so that the generation to come of your children that shall rise "up after you, and the stranger that shall come up from a far "land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and "the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; even all

* Deut. iv. 6—8.

"nations shall say: Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto "this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then "men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of "the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them "when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; and "the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, "and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as "it is this day." *

Assuredly, as this prediction was illustriously verified in the various fortunes of the Jewish nation under their judges and their kings, even to the total expulsion of the ten tribes, the signal captivity of the remaining two, and their as signal restoration; so it is still more illustriously verified by the present unparalleled dispersion of the Jews, and their equally unparalleled preservation as a distinct people, notwithstanding that dispersion. † Assuredly they at this day exhibit the most irrefutable proof of an overruling Providence, and of the divine original of those Scriptures which contain the laws they were bound to observe, and predict the calamities which should chastise the breach of that sacred obligation.

In the devout and beautiful prayer of Solomon, on the consecration of the temple, we find the principle here stated, publicly and solemnly recognised: "Moreover, concerning a stran-"ger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far "country for thy name's sake, (for they shall hear of thy great "name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm) "when he shall come and pray towards this place, hear thou in "heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the "stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may "know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and "that they may know that this house which I have builded, is "called by thy name." ‡ And again, at the conclusion of this devout address, the monarch prays, "Let these my words, "wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh "unto the Lord our God day and night, that he may maintain "the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel,

* Deut. xxviii. 9. 10. 15. 37; also xxix. 22. 24. 25. 28.

† On this subject consult Newton on the Prophecies, Dissertation vi. vii. viii.; and Lardner's Three Discourses to prove the circumstances of the Jewish People an argument for the truth of the Christian religion, in his tenth volume, p. 63 et seq.

‡ 1 Kings, viii. 41—43.

"as the matter shall require: that all the people of the earth "may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else."*

In this remarkable passage, which is the more decisive as it contains a solemn recognition of the principles and objects of the Jewish Law, proceeding from the highest human authority, and sanctioned by the immediate approbation of God, whose glory filled the house of the Lord during this solemn supplication, we perceive it is clearly laid down, not only that the Jewish scheme was adapted and designed to make "all the people of the earth "know that the Lord was God, and that there was none else;" but also that the stranger from the remotest region, who should be led to believe in and to worship the true God, was not only permitted, but called and encouraged to "pray towards the "temple at Jerusalem," to join in the devotions of the chosen people of God, and equally with them hope for the divine favour, and the acceptance of his prayers; without becoming a citizen of the Jewish state, or submitting to the yoke of the Mosaic ritual or civil law.† For the words of Solomon evidently suppose, that the stranger whom he describes as thus supplicating God, remained as he had originally been, "not of "the people of Israel."

How far the decided superiority of Jehovah over the idols of Egypt and Canaan, ‡ and the clear manifestation of divine justice, mercy, and power, so conspicuously exhibited by the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, and their settlement in the promised land, were effectual in diffusing the knowledge of the true God, it is perhaps impossible accurately to ascertain; that they did not produce any extended permanent national

* 1 Kings, viii. 59, 60.

† From 2 Chron. ii. 17, it appears Solomon found in Israel strangers of such a rank of life as were fit to be employed in assisting to build the temple, 153,600. These (as the commentators agree, vide Poli Synopsin, and Patrick, &c.) were proselytes to the worship of the true God, and the observance of the moral law, though not circumcised. Patrick observes, "These were the reliques (as Kimchi thinks) of the Amorites, Hittites, "Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, mentioned aftewards, ch. viii. 7. But "they were not idolaters, for then David would not have suffered them to "dwell in the land. But they worshipped God alone, though they did not "embrace the Jewish religion wholly, by being circumcised. These David "had numbered, that he might know their strength and their condition; "which did not proceed from such vanity as moved him to number his own "people; but out of a prudent care that they might be distinguished from "Jews, and be employed in such work as he did not think fit to put upon "the Israelites." See 1 Chron. xxii. 2.

‡ Vide supra, Lect. II.

reformation in any idolatrous country is certain. Indeed to produce such an effect at that period of the world, it seems evident, nothing but such a system of perpetual discipline and control as God exercised over his chosen people, would have been sufficient.

The Scripture history, however, supplies various instances of the deep impression made on the minds of those, who were perfectly apprised of the miraculous interpositions of God in behalf of his chosen people. In reciting the plagues of Egypt, we are told, that the magicians, when their own power was clearly exceeded and their arts baffled, acknowledged, "This "is the finger of God:" * and when Moses warned the Egyptians of the approaching plague of a very grievous hail, we find, "He that feared the word of the Lord, among the ser- "vants of Pharaoh, made his servants and his cattle flee into "the houses." † On the increasing accumulation of plagues, inflicted in consequence of the impious obduracy of Pharaoh, his servants at length ventured to remonstrate with that proud and inflexible monarch: they said unto him, "How long shall "this man (Moses) be a snare unto us? Let the men go, that "they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet "that Egypt is destroyed?" ‡ And we are told that "the man "Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of "Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people." § Nor can a more probable account be given of that "mixed multitude" ‖ who accompanied the children of Israel out of Egypt, than that it consisted of Egyptians, deeply convinced, by the miracles they had witnessed, of the supreme divinity of Jehovah, and thence determined to adhere to his worship, and for that purpose join themselves to his chosen people, share the same fortune, and submit to the same law. ¶

On the approach of the Jews to the land of Canaan, we perceive the terror of their God had gone before them: "Verily," says Rahab to the spies, "I know that the Lord hath given you "the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all "the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we "have heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea

* Exod. viii. 19. † Ibid. ix. 20. ‡ Ibid. x. 7.
§ Exod. xi. 3. ‖ Ibid. xii. 38.
¶ Vide Patrick in locum, and Selden de Synedriis, lib. i. ch. iii. p. 776, Vol. I. Tom. II.

"for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did "unto the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other "side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And "as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, "neither did there remain any more courage in any man, be- "cause of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven "above, and in earth beneath." * The similar avowal of the Gibeonites is equally express and strong: "From a very far "country thy servants are come, because of the name of the "Lord thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all "that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of "the Amorites that were beyond Jordan. Therefore now make "ye a league with us." † Their apology for the artifice they had practised is not less striking: "Because," say they, "it "was certainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy God "commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and "to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; "therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and "therefore we did this thing." ‡

It cannot be doubted but the Gibeonites being permitted to preserve their lives and property, on condition of becoming "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation "and for the altar of the Lord," must have renounced idolatry; for the attendance of avowed idolaters at the altar for any purpose, would have been an intolerable profanation. Had the other nations of Canaan imitated their conduct in submitting to the chosen people, and renouncing idolatry, they most probably would also have experienced mercy. § But relying on the protection of their idols, they encountered the host of Jehovah, and their destruction served to increase and to diffuse the terror of his power, ‖ a terror, the impression of which we trace the impression three hundred years after, when the Philistines, hearing that the ark of God had been brought into the camp of Israel, exclaimed, "Wo unto us: who shall deliver us "out of the hands of these mighty gods? These are the gods "that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilder- "ness." ¶ On this occasion, God, by permitting the Israelites

* Joshua, ii. 9—11.

† Ibid, ix. 9—11.

‡ Joshua, ix. 24.

§ Vide supra, Lect. I.

‖ Vide supra.

¶ 1 Samuel, iv. 8.

to be defeated and his ark taken, punished their presumption in relying on his protection without repenting of their crimes. While on the idol of the Philistines * and his worshippers, he inflicted such signal chastisement, † without any intervention of human agency, as seems admirably adapted not only to punish but reform their idolatry; yet in vain: at that period the human mind appears incapable of being thus reformed. The deluded Philistines acknowledged the resistless power of Jehovah; but they were thence stimulated merely to remove the immediate pressure of that power from their idols and themselves. They never once felt the reasonableness of forsaking such base absurdities, and adhering steadily to the worship of the God of Israel.

In the reign of Solomon, the tendency of the Jewish scheme to diffuse the knowledge of the true God appears increasingly conspicuous. The prosperity and wealth of this monarch, the magnificence of his temple, and above all, his fame for wisdom, attracted universal attention; for "his fame was in all nations "round about, and there came of all people to hear the wisdom "of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth, which had "heard of his wisdom." ‡ We have observed the solemn and public manner in which he encouraged the stranger who was not of the people of Israel, to worship the God of Israel. And it is probable many strangers may have been at this period attracted to rank themselves with the worshippers of the true God. Still, however, the human mind appears not to have been prepared for any general and permanent reception of that pure religion, which, acknowledging "God to be a spirit," declares "he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth." § And when we see that Solomon himself, with all his advantages, did not resist the seductions of idolatry, we cannot wonder if no considerable portion of those who may have been attracted by

* On this subject Warburton judiciously observes: "After this transaction we hear no more of any attempts among the Gentile nations to "join the Jewish worship with their own. They considered the God of "Israel as a tutelary Deity, absolutely unsociable, who would have nothing "to do with any but his own people, or with such particulars as would "worship him alone, and therefore in this respect different from all other "tutelary gods, each of which was willing to live in community with the "rest."—Vide Div. Leg.

† 1 Samuel, ch. v. and vi.

‡ 1 Kings, iv. 29 to 34; and x. 1 to 13.

§ Gospel of St. John, iv. 23, 24.

his fame, and attentive to his instructions, could permanently emancipate themselves from its fascinating power.

We have indeed abundant proofs how deeply rooted was the opinion of the world's being governed by an indefinite number of local and national guardian gods, rivals in power and influence; no one of whom however absolutely excluded the worship of the rest. So that it was believed to be the interest and the duty of each nation to adore and conciliate the gods of every country they conquered or settled in—retaining at the same time, with undiminished reverence, the idols of their own ancestors, as their peculiar guardian deities. While this was a principle universally admitted, no display of power and majesty on the part of the God of the Jews, could produce any other effect than an abortive and absurd attempt to associate the worship of Jehovah with that of those base idols which a deluded world adored;* an attempt which the dignity of the true God must necessarily resent and punish.

A most remarkable instance of the truth of this observation occurs, in the conduct of the colony planted by the King of Babylon in Samaria, to supply the place of the ten tribes whom he had carried into captivity. Their history casts so much light on the subject now under discussion, that I conceive it necessary to transcribe it in a note, as we find it related with all the characters of truth by the sacred historian.†

* Consult, on this principle of intercommunity in the Pagan religions, Warburton, Book ii. sect. vi. Vol. ii. p. 33. And this being the principle on which the Samaritans originally adopted the worship of Jehovah, (ib. p. 50.) while in every case the condemnation of this principle by the Jewish religion, and its allowing only the worship of Jehovah, prevented its being received by the heathens.—Vide Warburton, Book v. sect. ii. Vol. iv. p. 203. See also Ezekiel xvi. 34.

† The 2d of Kings, xvii. 24, &c. "And the king of Assyria brought men "from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and "from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the "children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities "thereof. And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they "feared not the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions amongst them, which "slew some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, "know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore he hath sent lions "among them, and behold, they slay them, because they know not the man-"ner of the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, say-"ing, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and "let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the "God of the land. Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away "from Samaria, came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should "fear the Lord. Howbeit, every nation made gods of their own, and put

And I observe, that this history affords an instance of heathens, placed probably in the most advantageous situation it was possible for heathens to be placed, in order to reclaim them from idolatry; introduced to supply the place of one part of God's chosen people, who had been expelled for their idolatries: thus brought into immediate contact with the remaining part, from whom they could not but learn much of the wonders of Jehovah's power; convinced by their own experience of the necessity of conciliating him as the supreme guardian God of the country in which they were newly settled, and compelled by their fears to solicit instruction in his Law. They receive that instruction; the books of Moses are placed in their hands, and were from that period uniformly acknowledged by them as of divine authority. Yet so deeply were their idolatrous propensities rooted in their souls, that though thus circumstanced, with examples of divine punishment immediately under their observance, instructed in the tenor, and acknowledging the authority of the divine Law, they could not be taught to discern the folly and impiety, or forsake the practice, of associating the worship of the basest idols with that of the great JEHOVAH. They indeed "feared the Lord, (but yet) they served their graven images, "both their children and their children's children; as did their "fathers, so do they unto this day."

"them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made. "And the men of Babylon made Succoth-Benoth, and the men of Hamath "made Ashima, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the Avites made "Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to "Adrammalech and Anammalech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared "the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the "high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the "nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do "after their former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after "their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment "which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; "with whom the Lord had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, "Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, "nor sacrifice to them: but the Lord, who brought you up out of the land "of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and "him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, "and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which he wrote "for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore: and ye shall not fear other "gods. And the covenant that I have made with you, ye shall not forget; "neither shall ye fear other gods. But the Lord your God ye shall fear; "and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit, "they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner. So these "nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their chil- "dren and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto "this day."

But though it does not appear that the Samaritans could at *that period* be completely reclaimed from idolatry, yet the measures employed to enlighten them with the knowledge of the true God seem gradually to have produced a considerable effect. On the return of the Jews from the seventy years captivity, an event which so clearly proved the inspiration of the Jewish Prophets, and the over-ruling providence of the God of Israel, the Samaritans were extremely desirous to join in rebuilding his temple, and celebrating his worship: for "they said unto the "chief of the fathers, let us build with you; for we seek your "God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice to him, since the days of "Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who brought us up hither."*

This proposal the Jews steadily rejected; and whatever their motives may have been, we can discern important reasons, in consequence of which this rejection appears to have been subservient to the purposes of the divine economy. The intermixture of the Samaritans with the Jews might have rendered the accomplishment of the prophecies concerning the family and birth of the Messiah, less clear—might have re-introduced idolatry among the restored Jews, now completely abhorrent from it, and in various ways defeated the grand objects of Providence in selecting and preserving a peculiar people. In consequence of this rejection, and the alienation it produced, the Jews probably became more vigilant in preserving the strictness, and the Samaritans more zealous in emulating the purity, of the Mosaic ritual. They became hostile, and therefore unsuspected guardians and vouchers of the integrity of the sacred text, particularly of the Pentateuch. And while the Jews in general, blinded by their national prejudices, could see in the promised Messiah only a national and temporal deliverer, the Samaritans appear to have judged of his pretensions with more justice and success.†

* Ezra iv. 2.

† Vide John iv. particularly 41 & 42. "And many more (of the Samari-"tans) believed, because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now "we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, "and know that this is indeed the Christ, the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." A confession of faith higher by some degrees (as Dr. Lightfoot remarks) than the Jews common creed concerning the Messiah: for they held him only for a Saviour of the Jewish nation. And so we may see how deeply and cordially these Samaritans had drank in the waters of life, so as to acknowledge Christ in his proper character. Vide also the testimonies of St. Chrysostom and Epiphanius to the same effect, as quoted by Kennicot, Dissertation, Vol. II. p. 41 to 47. The expression of the woman, "When the Messias cometh he will *tell us all things*," shews that she expected him in *his* proper character of a *religious instructor*.

And though our Lord visited them only as it were incidentally,* yet he was able to declare to them his character and avow his dignity, without that mysterious reserve and jealous caution which the proneness of the Jewish multitude "to take him by force and make him a king,"† constantly required. And it seems evident that the Samaritans were predisposed and prepared to receive and diffuse the light of the Gospel, more than any other description of men, the pious and reflecting part of the Jewish nation only excepted. And thus this circumstance, in the progress of the Jewish dispensation, which at first view might seem to prove it was peculiarly partial and confined, appears in its final result to have materially facilitated the diffusion of true religion in the world, and thus to have been subservient to the general advantage of mankind.

But it was during the captivity of the Jews, and their consequent dispersion amongst the inhabitants of the most illustrious empire in the civilized world, that God principally employed them as the means of exciting the attention of the heathen to his majesty and his providence. The prophetic denunciations of Jeremiah as to this subjugation and captivity, were so public and decided as to attract the notice of the Assyrian army and their mighty monarch; so that when Jerusalem was taken, Nebuchadnezzar gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan, captain of his guard, saying, "Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm. The reason of this peculiar regard is thus stated: "For Nebuzaradan said unto Jeremiah, The Lord thy "God hath pronounced all this evil against this place; now the "Lord hath brought it to pass, and done according as he hath "said; because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not "obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you."‡

Thus the captivity of Judah glorified God amongst the heathen, even at its commencement. But during its continuance God employed various means to convince the Gentiles of his universal providence and his resistless power. He raised up Daniel, §

* Vide John ch. iv. particularly ver. 26 and 42, on our Lord's reasons for reserve and caution, in avowing his divine character and full dignity, and for his sometimes concealing his miracles. Consult Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity. Watson's Tracts, Vol. iv. p. 22 to 39; and why he is thus distinct in his avowal of his being the Messiah to the Samaritans, ib. p. 30.

† John vi. 15.

‡ Vide Jer. xxxix. 12, and xl. 2.

§ Vide Daniel ii. iii. iv. v. vi.

whose prophetic spirit exalted him to the highest distinction, for Nebuchadnezzar "made him ruler over the whole province of "Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of "Babylon." Darius the Mede retained him in the same dignity, from the same cause. Thus also God rescued the three illustrious friends of Daniel from the burning fiery furnace, into which they had been plunged as martyrs for the worship of Jehovah, in opposition to the profanations of idolatry. He preserved Daniel himself from the den of lions, to which he was condemned for the same glorious cause; and punished the proud impiety of Nebuchadnezzar, by a seven years insanity and degradation from his throne, to which he was restored, only when with his reason his piety returned, and he submitted to pay solemn and public homage to the God of Israel. Thus also at the moment when Belshazzar was insulting Jehovah, by bringing forth the consecrated vessels of his temple to be polluted by his profanation, the miraculous handwriting on the wall dashed with horror his impious revelling, and announced his own impending destruction, and the downfall of his empire.

These were not obscure or doubtful transactions, related only by deluded fanatics or artful impostors, but attested by the authentic decrees of the most distinguished monarchs, solemnly proclaimed through their wide-extended dominions. What writer would have dared, if unsupported by truth, to have asserted, when the facts were recent, the promulgation of such decrees as these? "I king Nebuchadnezzar make a decree, "That every people, nation, and language, which speak any "thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and "Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be "made a dunghill: because there is no other god that can "deliver after this sort." * And again, on his restoration from insanity he issues this proclamation: "Nebuchadnezzar the "king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell "on all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it "good to shew the signs and the wonders which the high God "hath wrought towards me. How great are his signs! and "how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting "kingdom, and his dominion from generation to generation." † Then follows the narrative of his vision, its interpretation by Daniel, and its accomplishment; all which appropriate the

* Dan. iii. 29. † Dan. iv. 21.

king's acknowledgments of the Divinity to Jehovah the God of Daniel, of whom the monarch thus concludes: "Now I Nebu-"chadnezzar praise and extol, and honour the King of heaven; "all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those "that walk in pride he is able to abase." * Thus again the miraculous deliverance of Daniel from the lion's den, extorted from Darius this solemn and public homage to the God of Israel; "Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and "languages, that dwell in all the earth, Peace be multiplied "unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my "kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for "he is the living God, and stedfast for ever. He delivereth "and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven "and earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the "lions." †

And to crown this series of miraculous interpositions on one hand, and public homage to the majesty of Jehovah on the other, from the most distinguished monarchs of the Eastern world; the great Cyrus, founder of the Persian empire, was so fully persuaded of that divine Providence, whose Spirit dictated the prophecies so clearly pointing out the progress, nay the particular mode of his successes, that he became the active assistant in the restoration of the chosen people to their country. For in the first year of his reign he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, saying, "All the kingdoms of the "earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath "charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in "Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? the Lord "God be with him, and let him go up." ‡

These public and solemn testimonies to the majesty of the God of Israel must have contributed materially to check error and idolatry, in a country where the form of the government rendered the examples and the opinions of the monarchs so powerful and operative. They must have gained the Jews, even in their captive and degraded state, much consideration and attention; and as such a state led them to take pride in their religious superiority, the only superiority now left them, and to exalt the divine original and wisdom of their religion; so these events must have given their representations weight and credibility.

* Dan. iv. 37. † Ibid. vi. 25—27. ‡ Ezra i. 2 & 3.

It is scarcely possible for us at this remote period, and in this distant region, till lately very ignorant of, and still but imperfectly acquainted with, the history and literature of the East, to estimate the full effect of the divine interpositions, by the Jewish system, from the calling of Abraham to the close of the Babylonish captivity, in checking the progress of error and idolatry, and diffusing the knowledge of the divine existence and the divine dispensations, in this primeval seat and source of civilization and philosophy.

One remarkable instance however of the diffusion of the principles of true religion, by the instrumentality of the patriarchal and the Jewish revelations, occurs in the history of the Magian religion, or that of the ancient Persians, which is venerable both for its antiquity and purity, as well as important from the number of its professors; and which, if we may credit the most learned and industrious writers, * appears to have been originally derived from the instructions of Abraham, and to have received its great reformation by Zoroaster from the communication of that religious knowledge which the Jews in their captivity disseminated through the East.

We have strong testimony to prove that the Persians had corrupted that purity of faith which they had received from their pious ancestor Elam the son of Shem, by the errors and superstitions of the Zabian idolatry; † but that, probably, instructed by the Patriarch Abraham, ‡ they had thoroughly reformed their religion and restored its purity. In process of time that purity was again corrupted, if not by gross idolatry, in worshipping the heavenly bodies and the elements of nature, particularly fire, § yet certainly by paying them an excessive and

* Consult Hyde's Religio Veterum Persarum; The Religion of the Persees, by Henry Lord; Prideaux's Connection, Vol. i. from p. 299 to 331; Universal History, Vol. ii. Book i. ch. xi. sect. iii. p. 69; Pocockii Specimen Historiæ Arabicæ, ex Abulfaragio, p. 54; Maurice's History of Hindostan, Vol. ii. Book iv. ch. iii. from 275 to 322; Hottinger's Historia Persarum, p. 172.

† Hyde, ch. i.

‡ Hyde Relig. Persarum, ch. ii. & iii. passim, particularly p. 36. "To return," says Hyde, "to the ancient Persians, by their declaration in the "book called *Pharhang Sururi*, the religion of the Persians is termed the religion of Abraham and Zerdusht, or *Abrahamo Zerdushtensis*; for they "maintain, that Abraham was of the same religion with Zerdusht, who succeeded him long after, and that the religion of Zerdusht was derived from "Abraham: and by the religion of Abraham the Persians understand that "which (rejecting the first interpolation of the Sabians) teaches the worship "of the one only and true God, excluding all false religions," &c.

§ Hyde, cap. iv.

superstitious reverence; and above all, by admitting the doctrine of two independent principles of evil and of good, so hostile to the glory and the worship of the one great Jehovah, the universal Lord and King. From these corruptions this religion was again purified by the celebrated Zoroaster, who is represented, by those writers who seem best informed in Oriental literature, to have been cotemporary with Daniel, * and if not a

* Prideaux, Vol. i. p. 301; Hyde, cap. xxii. p. 298, and cap. xxiv. de Vita Zoroastris; and Maurice's History of Indostan, Vol. ii. p. 280.

Warburton, with his usual humility of opinion and urbanity of manner, calls all those who believed the fact of such a reformation in the Magian religion, as I have here ventured to suppose, "*bewildered men*,"* and considers the Zoroaster of Hyde and Prideaux as a mere imaginary personage, the production of modern Arabian fictions. However, notwithstanding the probability of my being numbered amongst those *bewildered unfortunates*, I cannot help assenting to the testimonies collected by Hyde, who could read and understand the original sacred writings of the Persians, and study the original Arabian histories, which Warburton certainly could not; and who appears to have spent a great part of his life in the investigation of this subject, with great patience, learning and sagacity. He expresses himself in the following manner: †

"The ancient prophet of the Persians, Zerdusht, or Zeradusht (by the "Grecians erroneously termed Zoroaster) wrote several books on different "subjects, as we have proved in the proper place; all written in a language "ancient, and in most places now obsolete. These remain as sealed-up "treasures, which the eyes of the learned have never examined. These "works in manuscript (*isti codices*) are still extant, preserved by the "followers of that religion with the greatest care; a circumstance which may "scarcely be credited by such as are strangers to these things, and who do "not even dream that the old Persians have always had a well-regulated "church, ‡ which preserved its ancient memorials, and that it flourished in "splendour to Yesdegherd, (the last of that name) who reigned about 1000 "years ago; and that it has continued from that time to this, though with "less splendour. These books of Zoroaster are almost strangers in Europe "(unless perhaps they lie somewhere unknown;) but some of them, relating "to theology (that I may not *appear* to have made *these assertions without* "*evidence*) are *in my possession*, written in an ancient language and character. "I procured them from the East by great labour and expense, and they are "indeed precious as gold. The autographs by Zoroaster were all written in "the ancient pure and unmixed Persic, as being that which at that period "was in use (without mixture of Arabic) in those parts of Chorasan or "Bactria, where was the tribe of Gushtasp, and which still is used there. "And in the same manner most copies are written in the same language, ex- "cepting some for the common use of moderns, which have sometimes "Median and Arabic words intermixed, all which signify *the book*, by which "name the Persian Mahometans or Medo-Persians sometimes emphatically "designate the Koran.

"It were to be wished, that all the works of Zoroaster were drawn out of "the darkness of the Magians, and brought to light amongst us; from which

* Warburton, Vol. iv. p 180. † Vide his Preface, p. 4 & 5.

‡ Vide Hyde. cap. i.; in which he adduces arguments to prove, that the ancient religion of the Persians had retained the worship of God from the earliest ages to the present day, though intermingled with some superstitious observance, which the Greeks and Mahometans, misunderstanding and misinterpreting, had falsely charged with direct idolatry.—On the constitution of the Persian church, consult Hyde, cap. xxviii.

Jew, yet perfectly acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, to which the distinguishing features of the reformation by him introduced were in a great measure conformable. Hence his con-

" undoubtedly many things which are now unknown to the European world, " would be discovered, to the advantage of the learned and inquisitive. It " is therefore incumbent on the patrons of letters to provide in time for the " expense attending this object; such a work would be worthy of some " prince or illustrious person. Nothing can be effected without the neces- " sary expense being defrayed, which would not however require a great " sum.

" Zoroaster, (as we have pointed out in cap. xxiv.) from his conversation " with the captive Jews in Persia, was well acquainted with the Old Testa- " ment, and many rites were from thence introduced by him amongst the " Persians; as appears as well from his history of the creation,* and other " things agreeing with Judaism, as from having inserted (as Gjannabius at- " tests) many passages of David's writings into his books, his having uttered " prophecies concerning the Messiah, foretold and revealed, though with " some obscurity, in the Old Testament. But it was besides necessary that " himself should have been favored with a clearer and more peculiar revela- " tion, and have left that written in his books for the Magi, who were to be " led by a star to Christ, when born in Judea; since otherwise they could " not have known that, nor would they have come to Judea from a distant " land. For these strangers understood this matter better than the inhabi- " tants of Bethlehem, or the king, or all the Jews, who were at once in- " structed and alarmed by this evangelic information of the Magi. All which " circumstances persuade us, that Zoroaster had a really divine revelation in " this particular; especially as we know that God sometimes (as to his wis- " dom it seemed good) has deigned to reveal truth to false Prophets."

I think it unnecessary to transcribe any further. On this last argument of Hyde I would observe, that if Zoroaster was acquainted with the prophetic writings, and communicated to his countrymen the certain expectation of a Messiah, which he had from thence derived, " in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed," it is altogether unnecessary to suppose that he was favored with any additional revelation; though we must admit that the Magi who visited our Saviour must have had an immediate revelation, to enable them to understand the meaning and follow the guidance of that supernatural appearance which conducted them to his presence. But the fact of the visit of the Magi, which otherwise seems unconnected with the other parts of the Scripture history, and difficult to account for, is so naturally explained by the supposition, that Providence had extended to the Persians the knowledge of the prophetic writings, and in connexion with that dispensation which had selected their nation, out of which to raise for his chosen people a temporal deliverer from the Babylonish Captivity, and a restorer of that temple where the Messiah was to appear, had (*as it were in return*) provided means for preparing them to receive the first tidings of that great spiritual Deliverer, who was to admit them and all nations into the church of God. This supposition appears to me to explain so clearly the visit of the Magi, and to combine this otherwise isolated fact with the entire series of the divine dispensations so harmoniously, that I confess it gives (in my judgment) additional credibility to the fact, that this knowledge of the prophecies respecting the Messiah had been communicated to the Persians, either through Zoroaster or some other medium; and induces me more readily to acquiesce in the testimony establishing this fact, which at the same time appears in its own nature, and independent of any such coincidence, sufficiently clear and unexceptionable.

* Hyde, cap. ix. on the Creation, cap. x. on the Deluge, and on the subject of the Magi, cap. xxxi.

demnation of two independent principles,* and his assertion, that the Supreme God was the universal creator of both good and evil, according to the doctrine of the sublime Isaiah, which the Prophet introduces in such a manner as to prove it was particularly designed to rouse the attention of the *Eastern nations*, and especially the *Persians*, to this important truth; since he connects it with the solemn prophetic designation of the great Cyrus, as pre-ordained to be God's anointed: for "thus saith the "Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have hold-"en to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of "kings; to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates "shall not be shut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked "places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and "cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the trea-"sures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that "thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy "name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, "and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: "I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. Thou "art my shepherd, and shalt perform all my pleasure; even "saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, "Thy foundation shall be laid. I am the Lord, and there is "none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though "thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising "of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me; "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and "create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord "do all these things." †

This radical principle of true religion Zoroaster inculcates clearly and strongly, accompanied with such additional circumstances, as prove, that while he wished to indulge the prejudices of the nation whom he taught, he yet was anxious to do so no further than might be consistent with the principles of the Jewish religion, from which his own were plainly borrowed. In this spirit he maintained that *under* the SUPREME BEING was the angel of light, the director of good, and an angel of darkness, the author of evil:‡ that between these is a perpetual

* Pocockii Specimen Historiæ Arab. p. 147; Hyde Relig. Persar. cap. ix. 162, and cap. xxii. p. 299.

† Isaiah xlv. 1, &c. and xliv. 28.

‡ Shahristani Relig. Persarum, ch. xxii; Hyde, ch. ix. p. 163, and ch. xxii. p. 299; Pocockii Hist. Arab. p. 148; and Lord, of the Religion of the Persees, cap. ii.

struggle, which will continue until the end of the world, when there shall be a general resurrection and retribution to all according to their deeds; when the angel of evil and his followers shall, in perpetual darkness, suffer the punishment they deserve, while the angel of light and his followers shall be received into everlasting bliss; after which there shall be no more any mixture of evil and good, of light and darkness; but they shall remain separated to all eternity. He also taught that the Supreme God originally created the good angel alone, and that the evil followed by the defect of good.

In this entire system we perceive a constant effort to admit the distinct principles of evil and of good acknowledged by the Magian superstition, but only in such a manner as was consistent with the Jewish doctrines, of the supremacy of Jehovah, the introduction of sin and death by the fall, and the expectation of a resurrection and final judgment; which last doctrine was (as we have shewn) distinctly and energetically taught by the Jewish Prophets.

In other subordinate particulars of Zoroaster's scheme we find a conformity to that of Moses, so close as cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition of a deliberate imitation.* Thus, as Moses heard God speaking from the midst of the fire,† Zoroaster pretended to the same; as the Jews had their glory or special presence of God resting on the mercy-seat, towards which they offered up all their prayers, so Zoroaster taught the Magians to hold the sacred fires in their temples as emblems of the divine presence; as the Jews had frequently received fire from heaven to consume their sacrifices, Zoroaster pretended to the same; as the Jewish priests were of one tribe, so were those of Zoroaster; as the former were chiefly supported by tithes and offerings, so were the latter. Even many of the Levitical distinctions between things clean and unclean are preserved in the religious code of Zoroaster. We also trace in the same work the history of Adam and Eve, of the Creation, and the Deluge. We find insertions from the Psalms of David, and praises of the wisdom of Solomon. And above all, he celebrates Abraham; his doctrines and religion he delivers as the doctrines and religion of Abraham; so that his innovations had for their object to bring back the Magian religion to the purity which it had

* This is clearly established by Hyde, cap. x. and xxii.

† Vide Lord's Relig. of the Persees, cap. viii. p. 42.

originally derived from the instructions of that illustrious Patriarch.

On the extent of this religion it is sufficient to say, that in the time of Lucian, * that is, soon after the promulgation of the Gospel, it was received by the great majority of the Persians, the Parthians, the Bactrians, the Chowaresmians, the Arians, the Sacans, the Medes, and many other eastern nations: and to this day no inconsiderable body of these Magians still remain in Persia and India, who observe the same religion which Zoroaster taught; who perform their public religious worship in his language, † and according to his rites; and preserve his book with the highest reverence, as the sole rule both of faith and manners.

It is a remark connected with the subject of the last observation, that whatever principles of true religion were adopted and preserved by *Mahomet*, he most certainly borrowed them from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; the worship of one God; the abhorrence of idolatry; the expectation of a future retribution, and the rules of moral conduct, so far as that expectation is undebased by the sensual pleasures promised by the Arabian impostor, and so far as these rules are uncorrupted by the sensual indulgencies he permitted. In a word, every thing praiseworthy in his system, is plainly derived from the Law and the Gospel. "Remember," says Mahomet, "when "the Lord tried Abraham by certain words, God said, Verily I "will constitute thee a model of religion unto mankind." ‡ Then follows a divine selection of Mecca for a holy house; a prayer of Abraham, that God would send an Apostle to teach his posterity the Koran: and the chapter proceeds thus: "Who "will be averse to the religion of Abraham, but he whose mind "is infatuated? Surely we have chosen him in this world, and "in that which is to come he shall be one of the righteous. "When his Lord said unto him, Resign thyself unto me, "he answered, I have resigned myself unto the Lord of all "creatures. And Abraham bequeathed this religion to his "children, and Jacob did the same, saying, My children, verily "God hath chosen this religion for you; therefore die not "unless ye also be resigned. Were ye present when Jacob was

* Vide Lucian de Longævis, Sect. iv. Vol. iii. p. 210. Editio Hemsterhusii.

† Prideaux, Vol. i. p. 300.

‡ Koran, ch. ii.

" at the point of death, when he said to his sons, Whom will ye " worship after me? They answered, We will worship thy God, " and the God of thy fathers, Abraham, and Ismael, and Isaac, " one God, and to him will we be resigned. That people " are now passed away; they have what they have gained, and " ye shall have what ye gain; and ye shall not be questioned " concerning that which they have done. They say, Become " Jews or Christians, that ye may be directed; say Nay; we " follow the religion of Abraham, the orthodox, who was no ido- " later; say, We believe in God, and that which hath been *sent* " *down unto us*, [*viz. the Koran*] and that which hath been sent " down unto Abraham, and Ismael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and " the tribes, and that which was delivered unto Moses and " Jesus, and that which was delivered unto the Prophets from " their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and " to God are we resigned." * &c.

Thus directly does Mahomet acknowledge that he drew the leading articles of his system from the sacred Scriptures; and undoubtedly he has adopted some of the highest importance: I quote one with pleasure. " It is not righteousness that ye turn " your faces in prayer towards the east and the west; but " righteousness is of him who believeth in God, and the angels, " and the Scriptures, and the Prophets; who giveth money for " God's sake unto his kindred, and unto orphans, and the needy, " and the stranger, and those who ask, and for redemption " of captives; who is constant at prayer, and giveth alms, and " of those who perform their covenant when they have cove- " nanted, and who behave themselves patiently in adversity and " hardships, and in time of violence; these are they who are " true, and these are they who fear God." How plainly do we perceive in this passage the principles inculcated by the Prophet Isaiah, with such superior beauty and energy: " Is not this the " fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to " undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that " ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, " and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? " when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that " thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy " light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall

* Sale's Koran, ch. ii. p. 25.

"spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before "thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt "thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he "shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst "of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking "vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and "satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, "and thy darkness be as the noon-day," * &c.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the absurdity and extravagance, the mixture of sensuality, licentiousness and deceit, which generally pervade the Koran, † justify the assertion, that its author was indebted for whatever degree of religious truth or virtuous principle is found in it, not to his own sagacity or his own rectitude of sentiment, but to those sacred sources of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, the divine authenticity of which he acknowledged, and the doctrines of which he was induced to adopt, in order to attract to himself as many as possible of the votaries of both these religions, in a country where their numbers were considerable, their ignorance the easy prey of delusion, and their attachment to the religions they professed weakened by the errors which at that disastrous period had corrupted, and the dissensions which had disgraced them. ‡

And now, on reviewing the facts and observations adduced in this section, it will be found, that the objection against the Jewish scheme, as being partial and confined to one obscure and insignificant nation, and therefore unworthy of the Deity, is false in fact, and inconclusive in reasoning; even without con-

* Isaiah lviii. 6, &c.

† In proof of this charge, it is unnecessary to multiply passages from the Koran, of absurdity and extravagance, as in chap. xv. the fall of the angels for refusing to worship Adam; in chap. xxvii. and xxxiv. the lapwing bringing in news to Solomon; the genii building for him; the ants and birds attending him, &c.; and chap. xvii. on the celebrated night-journey to heaven; with Prideaux's account, p. 43. and Abulfeda Vita Muham. chap. xix; of licentiousness and fraud, chap. xxxiii; the revelation permitting the Prophet to multiply wives, "*a peculiar privilege above the rest of the true believers*," vide p. 281, and to take his adopted son's wife; and a revelation to justify an amour with his slave, in chap. lxvi.; of a sensual paradise, in various places, particularly chap. xxv. Consult on this subject White's Bampton's Lecture Sermons, particularly Sermon 6, 8 & 9; and Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, passim.

‡ Vide Sale's Koran, the Preliminary Dissertation, sect. ii.; Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, the Preface; and Hottinger's Historia Orientalis, Lib. II. cap. ii. p. 212; De Statu Judæorum et Christianorum ante Muhammed; and cap. v. De Causis Conservantibus Muhammedismi.

sidering the Law as introductory of the Gospel; and that therefore, however confined in its immediate efficacy, its importance is clear, as being a necessary preparation for a pure and universal religion. This last is certainly the most decisive answer to the objection; yet independent of this, it has been proved, that the Jewish scheme was intended to produce, and did produce, a most important and beneficial effect, in checking error and idolatry through a great portion of mankind, while it continued in operation. It has been proved, that this effect was intended and foreseen, and that it formed a direct object of the divine care, and, as it were, a leading motive in regulating the measures of the divine economy. The establishment of the Jewish Law displayed to the nations of Egypt and Canaan, the most striking proofs of the power and justice of Jehovah, and his superiority over their base idols; inflicting the most signal punishment on their deluded worshippers, to prove his abhorrence of idolatry. The subsequent fortunes of the Jewish nation proclaimed the same great truths; in their apostasies and chastisements, as well as their repentance and deliverances, attesting the resistless power and overruling providence of their God, exercised not only over the Jews themselves, but all the nations placed in their neighbourhood, or affected by their fortunes: particularly after the establishment of the regal government, we see the conquests of David, the wisdom and wealth of Solomon, the magnificence of the Temple, and the splendor of the Jewish religion, attracting general attention. We see the situation of Judæa calculated to increase this effect: at the head of the Mediterranean Sea, in the neighbourhood of Phœnicia, Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. The divine Providence connects the chosen people with these various powers; and from this connexion various opportunities arise of displaying to the heathen nations the most striking proofs of the power, and extorting from their most powerful monarchs the most public and solemn homage to the majesty, of Jehovah.

But especially during the Babylonish captivity, the tendency, of Judaism to enlighten the heathen world becomes most conspicuous; it then exhibits its prophets and its martyrs, diffuses its instructions, lifts its head in the courts of monarchs, controls their fortunes and chastises their pride; till at length it is restored to its seat, now purified from idolatry; and by inculcating the

belief of a future retribution, and by the energetic exhortations of its prophets, confirmed by decided experience, it is enabled to preserve the worship of the true God, and a lively expectation of the promised Messiah, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; an expectation not confined to the Jews alone, but certainly prevailing, though perhaps indistinctly understood, through many nations of the East.

The effects of such a dispensation in enlightening mankind could not have been inconsiderable, even though we at this time and in this land, were unable distinctly to trace them. But they are still visible even to us, in the universal fame of Abraham and Solomon through the East, and the multitudes who trace to them their religious rites and opinions; in the history of the Samaritan settlement, and the religions of Zoroaster and Mahomet,* at this day professed by such numerous nations.

Should it still be affirmed that the Jewish scheme could not have been divine, because it did not universally enlighten and reform mankind; we answer, to expect such an effect is altogether wild and extravagant, for those is no reason to suppose it could have been produced at that period of the world, or indeed at any period which has ever yet occurred, by any methods of the divine government, consistent with the established course of nature and the moral agency of man. So deeply was mankind sunk in error and ignorance, in idolatry and all the vices connected with it, that any reformation of an entire nation, and much more of all nations, seems to have been totally impracticable. If the Egyptians and Canaanites could not be reformed by the wonders they beheld, and the chastisements they suffered; if the Philistines, the Samaritans and the Assyrians, so long witnesses of the divine Providence over the Jews, continued still idolaters; it seems *certain* no nation could have been permanently and *exclusively attached* to the worship of Jehovah, except by placing it under a system of miraculous instruction and miraculous control, *nearly* or *exactly similar* to *that* under which the chosen people were *disciplined* and restrained. Now, that many different nations should be thus miraculously disciplined and controlled, as far as we can judge, could not take

* "The ancient Persians and modern Mahometans are possibly (says Bi-"shop Butler) instances of people, who have had essential or natural reli-"gion enforced upon their consciences by the means of the Scripture; though "they never had the genuine Scripture revelation, with its real evidence, "proposed to their consideration." Vide Analogy, Part II. ch. vi. p. 319.

place without *totally altering the entire scheme of God's moral government*, and *utterly subverting the established course of nature*. And so long as any nations continued unenlightened and unreformed, the objection that the divine dispensations were partial and confined, would still remain. Is it not then evident, that such an objection rests on presumption, leads to absurdity, and would terminate in atheism?

But it is asked, Are not all partial dispensations unjust, and therefore unworthy of God? To this I answer, in the words of the celebrated Butler, that "there is nothing in all this "ignorance, doubtfulness and uncertainty, in all these vari-"eties, and supposed disadvantages of some in comparison of "others, respecting religion, but may be paralleled by manifest "analogies in the natural dispensations of Providence at pre-"sent, and considering ourselves merely in our temporal capa-"city.

"Nor is there any thing shocking in all this, or which would "seem to bear hard upon the moral administration in nature, if "we would really keep in mind, that every one shall be dealt "*equitably* with: instead of forgetting this, or explaining it "away, after it is acknowledged in words. All shadow of in-"justice, and indeed all harsh appearances, in this various eco-"nomy of Providence, would be lost, if we would keep in "mind, that every *merciful allowance* shall be made, and no more "be required of any one, than what might have been equitably "expected of him, from the circumstances in which he was "placed; and not what might have been expected, had he been "placed in other circumstances: *i. e.* in Scripture language, "'that every man shall be accepted *according to what he had*, "'not according to what he had not.'* This however doth not "by any means imply, that all persons condition here, is "equally advantageous with respect to futurity. And Provi-"dence's designing to place some in greater darkness with "respect to religious knowledge, is no more a reason why they "should not endeavour to get out of that darkness, and others "to bring them out of it; than why ignorant and slow people, "in matters of other knowledge, should not endeavour to "learn, or should not be instructed.

"It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the same wise and "good principle, whatever it was, which disposed the Author

* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

"of nature to make different kinds and orders of creatures, "disposed him also to place creatures of like kinds, in different "situations: and that the same principle which disposed him to "make creatures of different moral capacities, disposed him "also to place creatures of like moral capacities, in different "religious situations; and even the same creatures, in different "periods of their being."

Again, "A system or constitution (as that of nature) implies "variety; and so complicated an one as this world, very great "variety. So that *were Revelation universal*, yet from men's "different capacities of understanding, from the different "lengths of their lives, their different educations and other "*external* circumstances, and from their difference of temper "and bodily constitution; their religious situations would be "widely different, and the disadvantage of some in comparison of others, perhaps, altogether as much as at present."* Considerations these, which prove that all objections to Revelation derived from its want of universality, are contrary to the analogy of nature, and founded on mere arrogance and presumption. †

* Butler's Anal. Part II. ch. vi. p. 320.

† If any one who may happen to peruse this Work, finds himself disposed to believe, that the difficulties or objections which he thinks may be alleged against Revelation, from its *not being universal*, or its *proof appearing deficient*, justify him in *neglecting* its *evidence* or *violating* its *precepts;* I earnestly entreat him to read and to reflect on the considerations Butler suggests, in the remaining part of this chapter of the Analogy; to prove that such difficulties and objections may be intended to try his sincerity and moral rectitude, and that negligence and inattention under such a probation may prove most criminal and destructive. Vide Butler, Part II. ch. vi. p. 323.

SECT. II.—*Philosophy not introduced into Europe until near the period of the Babylonish Captivity—Thales—Anaximander—Anaxagoras—Probability that some of their opinions were ultimately derived from the Jews—General circumstances in the history of Grecian philosophy and religion, render the same thing probable of them—Their sages travelling for learning into Egypt and the East—Connexion of the Jews with Egypt at this period—Early philosophers of Greece delivered their tenets dogmatically—Inference from thence—The higher we trace the philosophy and religion of Greece, the purer it is found—Inference—Providence gradually prepared the world for the Gospel—Grecian language and literature—Connexion of Greece with Asia increased—Conquests of Alexander—Singular distribution of the Jews at this period—Jews in Egypt use the Greek tongue—Septuagint translation, its importance—The formation of the Alexandrian library—Sects of Grecian philosophy—Their effect—Extension of the Roman empire—Facilitated the spread of Christianity.*

HITHERTO we have traced the effects of the Jewish dispensation, chiefly in enlightening the Oriental nations; but let it be remembered, that previously to the Babylonish captivity the greatest part of Europe had been sunk in barbarism, and Greece itself began to emerge from the depths of ignorance only at that period. It was not until after * the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, that Thales travelled into Egypt, and from thence introduced into his native land, geometry, astronomy and philosophy: he appears to have been amongst the first who gave his countrymen any rational idea of the origin of the world: and his opinion, that *water was the first principle of things*, and *that God was that Spirit who formed all things out of water*, seems evidently borrowed from the Mosaic account indistinctly understood; that "In the beginning the earth was "without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of "the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the "waters." †

* Vide Chronological Tables of Marshal; and the Universal History; also Brucker's Historia Philosophiæ, Lib. i. ch. 1.

† Genesis i. 1.

Thales enim Milesius qui primo de talibus rebus quæsivit, aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret. Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. i. cap. x.; and Bruckeri Historia Philosophiæ, lib. ii. cap. i. vol. i. p. 465.

Anaximander,* the friend and disciple of Thales, seems to have expressed his opinion, though in different terms, yet such as indicate that it also sprang from the same source. He taught that *infinity* was *the first principle* of all things, from which they are produced, and in which they terminate. The most rational explanation of this idea seems to be, that it means that indefinite chaos combined with that infinite Mind from which all things proceeded.

The great Anaxagoras† also, who first distinctly taught the separate existence of a supreme all-directing Mind, spoke of the material world as originating from a confused mass, consisting of different kinds of particles, each of which afterwards combined in homogeneous masses; an opinion so similar to that of the Mosaic records, that we can scarcely doubt but that it was from them derived.

But, not to enter into a disquisition unnecessary to the object of this work, and in which certainty is scarcely attainable, it may be sufficient to remark some general circumstances in the history of the Grecian philosophy and religion, which appear to confirm the opinion of their having been derived ultimately from the source of the Jewish revelations; though corrupted and debased with the impure mixtures of Egyptian mystery and superstition, and rendered still more extravagant and incoherent, by that poetic imagery which the vivid imagination of the Greeks so promptly invented, and so fondly retained.

One of these circumstances is, that Egypt was certainly the school to which the sages of Greece resorted for instruction,‡ at and after the Babylonish captivity; and that some are related to have extended their journeys and researches into Chaldæa and Assyria. Now at all times Egypt had maintained such frequent intercourse with Judæa, that it could not be difficult

* Bruckeri Historia, lib. ii. cap. i. sect. x. p. 483, who explains the opinion of Anaximander as I have done.

† Ib. sect. xx. p. 503.

‡ Brucker affirms this of Thales, from whom the Ionic sect derived their opinions; and conceived that Thales derived his opinion from the traditions of the Phœnicians, "which he had learned in Crete and in Egypt; who in "their cosmogonies, laying aside an operating cause, philosophised on the "origin of natural objects from a chaos." Vide Vol. i. p. 466. If this is true, it is a melancholy instance, how perversely human reason misused and misinterpreted the information which revelation had supplied. The tenet of the soul's immortality is confessed to have been brought from Egypt to Greece by Thales. Brucker, vol. i. p. 475. Vide also Brucker's Account of the Opinions of Orpheus, particularly as to a Chaos, vol. i. p. 390.

there to learn the Jewish tenets, and have access to the Jewish Scriptures; while at the same time Assyria was full of the dispersed and captive Jews.

We have indeed the most decisive proof of the constant intercourse and close connexion of the Jews with Egypt, from the multitudes who at the beginning of the Babylonish captivity fled thither, and settled there in direct opposition to the commands of their God, and the warnings of his Prophet;* an event speedily followed by the reduction of Egypt under the Assyrian empire, and the signal punishment of the idolatrous Jews in that country, according to the prediction of Jeremiah; occurrences which would naturally excite a considerable degree of attention to the Law and the Prophets amongst the remaining Jews, both in Egypt and Assyria; and possibly even amongst such of the natives of those countries, as well as foreigners, who were more learned and inquisitive.

From this period the intercourse between Europe, Asia, and Egypt, continued to increase; and consequently, access to the sacred treasures of revelation became more practicable.

It is another remarkable circumstance, connected with our present subject, that the tenets of the earliest Grecian philosophers were delivered, not in the form of regular systems, discovered by sagacious investigation and supported by regular proof; but rather as unconnected dogmas learned from tradition, and resting on authority:† which would have been the natural consequence of their being formed from fragments of the Jewish revelations and records, separated from the scheme, and unsupported by the proofs and facts, with which they had been originally combined.

It is equally remarkable, that the higher we trace the theological opinions of the Grecian philosophers, and the popular systems of religion in the ancient world, the more pure and uncorrupted are they found.‡ The nearer we approach to the

* Vide Jeremiah, xlii. xliii. xliv. and xlvi.

† The sages known by the name of the seven wise men of Greece, it is acknowledged, delivered their doctrines in this form; and Brucker observes of Thales, "As the real reason which induced Thales to admit his grand "principle is unknown, it is not improbable that he arrived at it by tradi-"tion rather than by reasoning." Vol. i. p. 467.

‡ Vide Leland on the Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, Part i. ch. ii. and xx.; and the learned Shuckford, in his Connection of Sacred and Profane History, the Preface, and Book v. sect. ii.; Dionysius Halicarnassus on the Ancient Religion of the Romans; Plutarch, in Numa; and Juvenal, Sat. xiii. 46.

sources of Eastern tradition, the more conspicuous appears the radiance of that heavenly light of original Revelation, whose beams, though clouded and dispersed, still contributed to enlighten and direct mankind: the more clear traces do we discover of that primeval and patriarchal religion, which acknowledged the existence and inculcated the worship of the true and only God. We find no mortals yet exalted to divinities, no images in their temples, no impure or cruel rites. But when men "knowing God, glorified him not as God, their "foolish hearts were darkened;" * notwithstanding the progress of reason and civilization, the absurdities, profanations, and crimes of idolatry multiplied without end; † philosophy, plunging into vain disputations, wandered from the truth, or, shrinking from the terrors of persecution, ‡ did not dare to avow it.

But amidst this increasing gloom of idolatrous ignorance and error, this wide-spreading confusion, which threatened to reduce the whole moral and religious world to a wild chaos of vice and disorder, an over-ruling Providence gradually prepared for introducing the glorious light of the Gospel, and turning mankind from the power of Satan unto God. Literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, were rapidly diffused over Greece, and cultivated with a degree of ardour unequalled in any other age or country. Broken into small and free governments, blessed with the finest climate, the most picturesque scenery, and the most ingenious and animated people, here was formed a language, copious, expressive and harmonious; and here were produced those immortal works in poetry, eloquence, and philosophy, which rendered that language the universal dialect of the polite and learned, both in the East and West; and thus prepared it to become a general and permanent medium of communication, in which the records and the truths of Christianity might be distinctly and safely handed to succeeding ages.

In the mean time, Rome was gradually emerging from weakness and barbarism to power and celebrity on one side; while on the other, the connexion of the European world with the East, the residence of the chosen people of God, and consequently the fountain of religious knowledge, became daily more close and constant, by the mutual wars and invasions of the

* Rom. i. xxi. † Vide supra, Part II. Lect. I.

‡ Vide Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Part I. from chap. x. to xxii.

Greeks and Asiatics, the settlement of the Grecian colonies in Asia, and the extended commerce of the Greeks and Phœnicians: until at length the conquests of Alexander cemented the two continents together, and rendered the Grecian language universal and popular over the East.

We now find the Jews placed in a different situation from any preceding period of their history.* While a sufficient part of the nation had been restored to Judea, and there settled, to answer the primary purpose of forming a separate people, in order to preserve the Law and the Prophets, rebuild the Temple, and prepare the scene where the Messiah was personally to appear; where he was to verify the prophecies, particularly with respect to his descent, the place of his birth, and the minutest circumstances of his personal character and sufferings; where he was to promulgate his religion, and lay down his life for man; we see another great body of the nation retiring into Egypt, building a temple there, publicly exercising their religion, and flourishing in such multitudes under the protection of Alexander and his successors, that the Jews in Egypt nearly if not entirely equalled those of Judea, in number, wealth, and influence;† while they adopt the Grecian language so universally, that it becomes necessary to translate the Scriptures into Greek for their use,‡ and thus make them accessible to the learned and inquisitive in every country, whenever their attention should be excited to this study. And it should be remarked, that so necessary was such an adjustment of circumstances to produce this salutary effect, in opposition to the exclusive temper of the Jews settled in Judea; that this translation, which must have been received with such joy by the Jewish colonies, was regarded as the subject of national mourning by the Jews at Jerusalem.§

The unspeakable importance of this translation, which gra-

* Vide the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

† Vide Prideaux's Connection, part ii. book i. sect. viii. vol. iii. p. 63; Josephus's Antiquities, book xi. ch. ii.; book xii. ch. i. iii. iv.; book xiii. ch. iii. as to the building of the temple in Egypt; also his History of the Jewish War, book vii. ch. x. sect. iii.; book xiv. ch. viii. and x.; also his work against Apion, book ii. sect. iv. v. and vi.; and the Universal History, vol. iv. book ii.

‡ Vide Prideaux and Josephus, as quoted above; and the Universal History, vol. iv. book ii. ch. i.

§ Universal History, vol. iv. book ii. ch. i. p. 28.

dually included all the Scriptures of the Old Testament, has been already noticed: * by it the grand truths of religion, the history of Divine Providence, and the prophecies announcing the Messiah, became accessible to the learned and inquisitive, in every part of the then civilized world. All possibility of either questioning the existence, or falsifying the contents of those prophecies was thus precluded, and the stability of this signal proof of Revelation secured; though the rulers, doctors, and priests of that nation, with whom they had been originally deposited, rejected that divine Personage whom these prophecies announced; and must therefore have wished, had it been in their power, to alter their contents, in order to disprove their application.

About the period when this translation was completed, we see the Ptolemies collecting the celebrated library at Alexandria, which, for such a length of time formed the greatest depository of learning in the world, and which was so much admired and imitated by other princes. † And its being formed in the very same city with the most numerous colony of the Jews in Egypt, while it must have attracted thither all foreigners who were solicitous to acquire learning, must also have given them an opportunity of observing a form of religion so singular as that which the Jews maintained; and of inquiring into its principles and origin; an inquiry which the translation of the Scriptures into Greek rendered practicable: while the cessation of prophecy amongst the Jews, soon after their restoration from captivity, closed the canon of the Jewish Scriptures, and proved that the knowledge which that translation could supply was perfect and complete.

The same providential system of preparation for the introduction of a pure and universal religion, was equally conspicuous in many other gradual movements in the world, all concurring to promote the same effect. The inquisitive and vain-glorious turn of the Grecian character multiplied philosophic sects, which by their perpetual disputations directed the attention of mankind to religious and moral speculations; gradually undermined the influence, by exposing the absurdity of Pagan superstition and idolatry; and though they did not substitute in their room any

* Vide pp. 4 and 5.

† Vide Prideaux, Part ii, book i. vol. iii. p. 21; and book ii. p. 103.

perfect system of natural religion, yet many of its great truths were occasionally debated upon with spirit and subtlety, and though not clearly proved or practically inculcated, they yet became the objects of general interest and curiosity: so that the want of further information,* and above all of such divine instruction as should remove men's doubts and terrors on these most awful subjects, was felt and acknowledged by the most sagacious and reflecting minds; and therefore such instruction would be more attentively listened to, and more thankfully and joyfully received.

Connected with the same system, and tending to promote the same effect, was the great and permanent extension of the Roman empire; which broke down all the barriers of separation between the Eastern and Western worlds, united the Euphrates and the Thames under the same masters, and blended all the civilized states of Greece and Asia, of Africa and Europe, in one great community; in every part of which the Grecian language, now the language of the Sacred Records, became as it were the common tongue of the learned and the polite; while a perpetual intercourse between the various parts of this mighty empire, the establishment of a firm and regular police through its whole extent, and, above all, that universal peace, which its undisputed ascendancy, secured through the entire civilized world, when the Gospel of peace was first promulgated; all these circumstances secured to the teachers of that Gospel ready access to all the nations of the world capable of profiting by the sacred truths they taught, and gave men leisure to consider their unspeakable importance, and examine the evidence to which they appealed.

* Vide Leland on the Necessity of Revelation, Part i. ch. xxi.; Clarke's Evidences of natural and revealed Religion, in Prop. vii.

LECTURE VI.

JUDAISM PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY.

SECT. I.—*Objection derived from the supposed inconsistency of the Jewish and Christian schemes—The Law and the Gospel consistent—Jewish scheme intended, from the first, to introduce the Gospel—Proved from the promise to Abraham—Circumstances attending the repetition of this promise, show that Abraham was a type of Christ—Jacob's prophecy concerning Shiloh—Psalm* ii. xxii. xlvii. lxvii. *and* lxxii.—*Isaiah* ii. *and* xlix.—*These prophecies clearly prove the Mosaic Law was to introduce and then give place to the Gospel—Why Moses did not expressly announce the intended abrogation of the Mosaic Law—He has intimated this in his promise of a prophet to arise "like unto himself"—Our Lord alone answers his character—Christ a priest after the order of Melchisedeck—Meaning of this declaration explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews—Argument in this Epistle, ch.* x.—*Jeremiah prophecies the substitution of the Gospel for the Law—And the spiritual nature of the Gospel.*

MATTHEW, v. 17.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to "fulfil"

THE series of facts adduced in the last Lecture, might be sufficient to shew that the Jewish dispensation was calculated, not only to preserve true religion amongst the Jews, but to check idolatry, and diffuse religious knowledge amongst the surrounding nations, as far as appears to have been practicable in the state of mankind, at the various periods when these facts took place; and above all, that it was fitted to operate as a preparation for the introduction of that spiritual and universal religion promulgated by the Gospel of Christ. But in opposition to this inference we find it alleged, that the Jewish scheme could not, from its very nature, operate as preparation for the Gospel, being of an opposite, and, as is asserted, even of a contradictory character, expressly declaring itself of eternal obligation, while it as expressly is confined to a single nation, excluding all the rest of mankind. And hence, it is said, these systems of religion cannot both proceed from God.

It shall be the object of this Lecture to refute this objection, by shewing that there is no inconsistency between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations; but that the Jewish Law was from the first intended not to be of eternal obligation, but declared to be subservient to and introductory of the Gospel, with which it is connected by a perpetual unity of design, and an accurate correspondence of parts, all centering in one grand object—the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, for which the Jewish scheme was an indispensable and effective preparation.

That this scheme was from the first intended, not for the exclusive benefit of the chosen people, but as instrumental to the introduction of a universal blessing to mankind, is evident from the very first promise made to Abraham, which, to the personal and national blessing with which it encouraged and rewarded the faith and obedience of the Patriarch, added this remarkable declaration, as the crown and completion of all: "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* A declaration again repeated to the same Patriarch on two solemn occasions, first, on disclosing to him the intended punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, and receiving with the most gracious condescension his humble but earnest intercession in favor of those few righteous who might be found in those receptacles of guilt;† and again, still more emphatically, in consequence of his obeying the voice of God, and "not withholding his son, his only son."‡

It deserves to be particularly noticed, that in the former of these transactions, the Patriarch *interceding* with God as "Judge of all the earth,"§ was an evident *representation* of that GREAT INTERCESSOR, whose appearance was predicted in the promised blessing; and that in the latter he beheld, in the commanded sacrifice, and the providential restoration of his only-begotten son, the clear representation of the only-begotten Son of God, prefiguring at once the voluntary sacrifice and the triumphant resurrection of that Christ who was the promised seed, "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed."‖ So that in both cases, but especially the last, the nature of the promised blessing was not obscurely intimated by the immediate circumstances attending the divine declaration.

* Gen. xii. 3. † Ibid. xviii. ‡ Ibid. xxii. 16.
§ Ibid. xviii. 25. ‖ Vide Supra.

As the Patriarch thus "rejoiced to behold the day of Christ," it cannot be doubted but he communicated to his family this joyful hope, and explained the great object to which it was directed; so that when the same promise was solemnly renewed, first to Isaac,* and afterwards to Jacob,† its meaning and object were distinctly understood by these Patriarchs; and that wherever the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is referred to, or the covenant which God made with them and their posterity, recognised as the glory and the hope of Israel, this essential part of it, the promise of the Messiah, and the blessing by him to be communicated to all the nations of the earth, must have been equally and perpetually recognised as the great object of the Jewish scheme, to which every other part of it was instrumental and subordinate. So that the original foundation and primary characteristic of this scheme, far from being *partial* and *exclusive*, avowedly extended to all the nations of the earth, and centered in that Messiah, who is the grand object of all the divine dispensations, from the creation of the world to its close.

This original and perpetual purpose of God, to extend the effects of the Jewish dispensation to all the nations of the earth, is also most clearly recognised in the celebrated prophecy of Jacob; "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-"giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him "shall the gathering of the people be."‡ Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the event described, and the period marked out by the "*sceptre's* departing *from Judah*, and the lawgiver from between his feet;" there appears no reasonable ground for doubting, that the word Shiloh designates the Messiah, and that the gathering of the people to him pre-signifies the extension of the church to all nations without distinction.

The admission of the Gentiles into the church of God is indeed an event which the inspired Psalmist predicts, in a vari-

* Gen. xxvi. 4. † Ibid. xxviii. 14.

‡ Genesis xlix. 10.—I am disposed to adopt Warburton's interpretation of this prophecy, in preference to any other; and to believe that it denoted the continuance of the theocratic sceptre over the Jews, which remained until our Saviour came, who instituted in its place his kingdom, "not of this world." Warburton, Book v. sect. iii. subsect. iii. Vol. iv. p. 243 to 266—The interpretation of Patrick, from Wagenseil, seems the next in clearness and probability.—Consult also Newton's fourth Dissertation; Poli Synopsin, Dodd, and the Bibliotheca Biblica, in locum.

ety of passages, with the greatest clearness; and which all the Prophets dwell on with such distinctness, copiousness and animation, as prove, beyond controversy, that this great consummation was uninterruptedly the leading object of the divine purposes and communications, to which the whole Jewish scheme was merely preparatory and subordinate. It is expedient to cite a few passages to illustrate this assertion; a few however will be sufficient, for its truth is so certain, that it scarcely requires confirmation; and the passages establishing it are so numerous, to transcribe them all would be at once tedious and unnecessary.

In Psalm ii. which is clearly and exclusively prophetic of the Messiah, the Psalmist asks, "Why do the heathen rage, and "the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set "themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the "Lord, and against his* Anointed, saying, Let us break their "bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." This clear prophecy of the resistance which would be attempted against the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, is followed by as clear a prediction that this opposition would be ineffectual: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have "them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his "wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set "my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: "the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have "I begotten thee." Thus emphatically and distinctly does the inspired Penman predict the divine nature and supreme exaltation of the Messiah; and he then proceeds to declare the universal extent of his dominion: "Ask of me, and I shall give "thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts "of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with

* All the versions agree in translating this passage in a manner applicable to the Messiah. The Chaldee Targum uses the very word Messiah, and the Seventy the word Christ or Anointed. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni. Indeed the 7th, 8th and 12th verses are entirely incapable of being fully accomplished, or clearly understood, except as applied to the Messiah. The only variety of any moment is in the 12th verse, where, instead of "Kiss the Son," (i. e. as we explain it, adore him) all the versions, except the Syriac, read, "receive instruction, lest the Lord be angry," &c. This makes the sense more clear and coherent, and is justified by a very slight change in the original. Yet Houbigant, whose authority is considerable, retains the present reading of our Hebrew text, and translates it, "Adore the Son."

"a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's "vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, "ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice "with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye "perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." It seems impossible to describe in clearer terms the Messiah's reign, as not confined like the Mosaic Law to a single nation, but including within its sway all nations and regions of the earth.

In Psalm xxii. * which describes with equal distinctness the rejection, the sufferings, and the death of the appointed Saviour, even to the minutest particulars of "their piercing his "hands and feet, parting his garments among them, and cast-"ing lots upon his vesture, † the prophecy goes on to declare, that notwithstanding this apparent depression, God would regard and exalt the sufferer: "he hath not despised nor abhorred the "affliction of the afflicted: neither hath he hid his face from "him: but when he cried unto him, he heard." And it proceeds to declare that the final event would be, his extending universally the dominion of true religion: "All the ends of the "world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the "kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the "kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the "nations."

With equal sublimity does Psalm xlvii. call on all nations; "O clap your hands, all ye nations; shout unto God with the "voice of triumph. For God is the King of all the earth. "Sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the "Heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness. The "princes of the people are gathered together into the people of "the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto "God: he is greatly exalted."

Psalms lxvii. and lxxii. are not less express in predicting, that a period should arrive, when the dominion of the God of Israel should be acknowledged by all the nations of the earth. The latter especially declares, that a Son should inherit the kingdom of David, who should "judge the people with righteous-"ness, and the poor with judgment." And the extent and

* Vide Matthew xxvii. 46, where our Lord appropriates this Psalm as directly applicable to his sufferings.

† Ver. 16 & 18.

effects of his dominion are described in terms applicable only to the Messiah's reign: "In his days shall the righteous flou-"rish: and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the "river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wil-"derness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the "dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring "presents: the kings of Arabia and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, "all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve "him." The nature of this homage, and its motives, are declared to be spiritual and religious: "For he shall deliver the "needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no "helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save "the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from de-"ceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his "sight. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be "continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in "him: all nations shall call him blessed." Enraptured at the glorious prospect of the universal dominion of Him, in whom, according to the promise made to Abraham, "all nations were "to be blessed," the Psalmist exclaims, "Blessed be the Lord "God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. "And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole "earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen."

Isaiah, the great evangelic prophet, is still more explicit in predicting the extension of the Messiah's kingdom over the Gentile world; and that the character of the religion to be by him established, would be in the highest degree spiritual and comprehensive, free from any local or national restriction, and unincumbered with any burthensome ritual or ceremonial observances. Yet that Israel should be instrumental in forming this kingdom, and should (ultimately at least) partake the blessings it confers, "It shall come to pass," says he, "in the "last (or latter) days, that the mountain of the Lord's house "shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be "exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go "up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God "of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will "walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law,

"and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall "judge among the nations, and shall rebuke* many people: "and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their "spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword "against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."†

This prediction of the extent and effects of the Messiah's reign, though exactly descriptive of the genuine character of the Christian religion, and its perpetual tendency to produce the full effect here described, yet undoubtedly peculiarly relates to a period in the history of the Church of Christ not yet arrived; to the final result of a system yet in progress; which, whenever it shall be accomplished, will display in full lustre the wisdom and the mercy of the divine dispensations. But it is such a result as the continuance of the Jewish ritual, and the restrictions of the Jewish law, could never produce. It therefore implies an improvement of that law, and a breaking down of that wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, founded on the Mosaic ritual, which the Messiah, appearing as a new lawgiver, could alone have authority to remove.

In various subsequent chapters, the Prophet with still greater clearness predicts the extension of the Messiah's kingdom over the heathen world. I select only one passage, as remarkable from its connecting this prediction with the declaration of the Messiah's humiliation; and therefore proving the kingdom described by the Prophet, was spiritual, not temporal: "And "now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his "servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not "gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and "my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light "thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes "of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also "give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my "salvation to the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the "Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man "despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of "rulers; Kings shall see and arise; princes also shall worship

* Instead of "he shall rebuke many people," Lowth translates, "he shall "work conviction in many peoples," which gives a much more clear and consistent sense.

† Isaiah, ii. 2, &c.

"the name of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of "Israel, and he shall choose thee."*

Thus expressly do the Prophets foretel the universal extent and the spiritual nature of the Messiah's reign. Now, had no distinct and direct intimation been given, that a change must take place in the character of the religion established by divine interposition, in order to fit it for this greater extension, and more spiritual efficacy; yet the nature of the case would compel us to infer the necessity of such a change.

A religion which was to be received in every nation and region of the globe, could not, like the Jewish Law, require that all the adult males of every nation professing it, should visit the Temple at Jerusalem three times each year, to celebrate the three great festivals: this would be physically impossible. It could not enjoin the observance of those various rites, ceremonies, and institutions, which were either commemorative of events in which the Jewish nation alone were interested, or which were calculated to separate them from all other nations, by a marked opposition of laws and manners: this would be totally unnatural and irrational, when it was predicted that the Jewish dispensation should terminate in a religious system, calculated to *attract*, not to *repel*, the rest of mankind, and destined to embrace all the nations of the earth.

It is indeed unreasonable to expect that the Jewish Lawgiver, at the very moment he was delivering his law, should be directed by God to weaken the reverence of the nation for it, by declaring that its duration would be short, and its obligation transitory; or that, while he was labouring to impress the necessity of avoiding all similarity of manners, principles, and religion, with the surrounding nations, he should at the same moment distinctly announce that it was for the sake of these very nations, ultimately, that the peculiar scheme of the Jewish institutions was formed, and that this scheme would terminate in the abolition of all the distinctions now established.

We know the Jews were at that time at once dull and carnally minded, very averse to the restraints their law imposed, and above all, to its prohibitions against imitating the manners of their neighbours, sharing in their festivities and idolatries,

* Isaiah, xlix. 5—7.

and uniting with them by intermarriages.* And we can hardly conceive it possible for Moses to have expressed to them such sentiments as these, without utterly alienating them from the system he proposed, and subverting the influence of his laws by the very manner of promulgating them; and this without the least conceivable necessity for acting so hazardous a part, or the prospect of any advantage to be derived from it.

The divine wisdom is indeed most conspicuous in the conduct of this as of every other part of the Jewish scheme. In the infancy of the Jewish people, while they were immature in intellect, and wedded to external objects, a law adapted to that state, and calculated at the same time to prepare for a more universal and perfect religion, was employed to control them by its restraints, while it attracted and engaged them by its ceremonies and its festivals. During this stage of their progress, it was unnecessary, and would probably have been injurious, to have announced distinctly the future abrogation of the ceremonial law, and the admission of the Gentiles into the Church of God. But as soon as the adherence of the people to that law was sufficiently secured by its long establishment, and by the erection of the temple, the prophets were empowered to predict this constantly intended change in the divine dispensations, with perpetually increasing clearness as that change approached.

It ought however to be observed, that the Jewish lawgiver, to prevent all suspicion of inconsistency in the divine conduct, not only recorded the promise to Abraham,† and the prophecy of Jacob, ‡ but was himself empowered to intimate the purpose of God, to send at some future period another lawgiver, authorised to promulgate a new law.

This seems plainly the purport of his celebrated prophecy, delivered towards the close of his own ministry: "The Lord "thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of "thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken. Ac- "cording to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in the "day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice "of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any "more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They

* Vide supra † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

"have well spoken that they have spoken. I will raise them "up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and "I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto "them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to "pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which "he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." *

It has been justly observed, that this Prophet, to be like unto Moses must be a LAWGIVER; for this appears the essential distinction between him and all inferior prophets. † We cannot suppose the divine Messenger thus pre-eminently marked out, was to do nothing more than cause the ancient statutes of his predecessor to remain as originally established; since that essential character of similarity would thus be wanting, and no sufficient reason would appear for *his* mission being *peculiarly* predicted. And since the promulgation of a new law implies a change of the pre-existing system, the certainty of such a change being intended may be fairly inferred from this prophecy.

We cannot but observe how accurately the *meek* and *humble* tenor of our Saviour's life, and the merciful nature of all his stupendous miracles, accords with the *motive* assigned by the Jews, for imploring that they might not again receive the will of God in the same manner as they had done at Mount Sinai; even the *overwhelming terror* with which they were then filled, "Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither "let me see this great fire any more, that I die not." God, indulgent to this weaknsss of human nature, approves of and grants this entreaty: and as the mode of impressing the Jewish law was suited to its nature as a system of coercion: so the Gospel scheme, which proclaimed not only "Glory to God in the highest," but "on earth peace, and good will to man," was ushered in with the most attractive manifestations of mildness

* Deut. xviii. 15, &c.

† Vide Newton's sixth Dissertation, where it seems to me clearly proved that this prophecy cannot be applied either to Joshua or any other successor of Moses, as judge or king: nor yet to any single prophet or succession of prophets; particularly from the three concluding verses of Deuteronomy, probably added by Ezra, and the history in Numbers, xii. from 1 to 8.—Vide also Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, Vol. ii. Book ii. sect. 3. ch. 3. This learned writer has very fully treated of the subject of this entire Lecture, in his second Book, to which I would refer my reader; as I conceive it unnecessary for me to dwell more fully than I have done, on a subject which has been so lately and amply discussed by this learned Divine.

and mercy, benignity and love. As Moses deserved the epithet of the "meekest of men," so the Son of God displayed meekness and forbearance as much greater, as the dignity from which he stooped was unspeakably exalted, his voluntary humiliation profound, and his sufferings unparalleled. How wonderful the coincidence of the prophetic description and the real history! "Behold" (the evangelic Prophet thus anticipates the facts) "my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom "my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him, he shall "bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor "lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A "bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he "not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.* He "shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment "in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."† And again, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his "mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a "sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his "mouth."‡ Yet, nothwithstanding this humiliation, he displayed a dignity as a divine lawgiver, which no other prophet presumed to claim. "He spake as one having authority," as exercising a right not only to explain and enforce the Mosaic laws, but to *repeal*, to *alter*, and to improve them; as in the instance of the liberty with respect to divorce, which our Lord states Moses to have yielded to the Jews "for the hardness of their hearts;" but which he disallows, as inconsistent with the original strictness of the marriage tie, and the perfect purity of the Gospel scheme.§

And to complete the accurate accomplishment of the Mosaic prediction, how awfully is that clause fulfilled, which declares in the name of Jehovah, "Whosoever will not hearken unto my "words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of "him."‖ The Jewish nation did not hearken to the promised Prophet; and of the whole nation how awfully has it been required! Eighteen hundred years dispersion and degradation have

* Lowth, for the words "he shall bring forth judgment unto truth," reads "he shall publish judgment so as to establish it perfectly," which gives a much more clear sense.

† Isaiah, xlii. 1—4. ‡ Isaiah, iii. 7.

§ Matt. xix. 3—9. ‖ Deut. xviii. 19.

not yet closed the effect of that dreadful imprecation, "His "blood be on us, and on our children." *

Thus is Jesus of Nazareth, though in his DIVINE NATURE infinitely *superior*, yet as a *Prophet* accurately *like* unto Moses: in his office as legislator; in his full participation of the divine councils and the divine influence, for "God gave not the Spirit "by measure unto him;" in the magnitude and variety of his miracles; in the importance and permanence of that religious system which he introduced; in the meekness of his character, † and the signal punishments with which God has vindicated the authority and punished the neglect of his Laws.

Subsequent intimations of the intended substitution of a more spiritual religion, and a more refined and perfect Law in place of the Mosaic, are frequent and clear. The fact recorded by the Jewish Lawgiver, of the great patriarch Abraham having paid religious reverence to Melchizedek, "the priest of the "most high God," receiving his blessing, and paying him tithes, is alluded to by the inspired Psalmist, at the very period when the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial Law were most fully established: when he describes that promised ruler, whom he terms "his Lord," declaring, "The Lord said unto "my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine ene-"mies thy footstool;" to whom he ascribes as a distinguishing feature of his character, his possessing a priesthood similar to that of Melchizedek, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not "repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchize-"dek." ‡ This declaration the Apostle to the Hebrews argues on at large, § and irrefutably proves, that it implies the abroga-

* Matt. xxvii. 25.

† For a variety of more minute points of resemblance, consult Bishop Newton's sixth Dissertation; Eusebius, Demonstratio Evangelica, lib. i. cap. iii. and lib. ix. cap. xi.; and Collatio Philippi a Limborch cum erudito Judæo, p. 4, 31, 289, & seq.; and Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, Vol. ii. pp. 145 & 266.

‡ Vide Gen. xiv. 18—20; and compare Psalm cx. 4. and Heb. vi. 20. with the entire chap. vii.

§ The general scope of the Apostle's argument is, that Abraham acknowledged the superiority of Melchizedek; that his order of priesthood was therefore prior and superior to the Aaronical order; and that Christ being of that order, as the Psalmist prophesies, his priesthood is superior to and supersedes the Aaronical, which must therefore be changed, and with it the Levitical Law. In the 2d verse the Apostle declares, Melchizedek was by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, that is

tion of the Levitical Law, and the substitution of a more perfect religion. "If," says he, "perfection were by the Levitical "priesthood, (for under it the people received the Law) what "further need was there that another priest should rise after "the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of "Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of "necessity a change also of the Law." * For the full illustration of this argument, I refer to the learned commentators who have explained the passage in which it is contained: the conclusion thus stated by the Apostle is evidently contained in the Scriptures, and is that which I wish to impress, as it proves the consistency and illustrates the connexion of the Mosaic and the Christian codes.

With equal clearness the same great Apostle argues † from the very nature of the Levitical Law, that it was intended as the type and introduction of the Christian scheme; and here again adduces the prophetic declaration of the inspired Psalmist: "The Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not "the very image of the things, ‡ can never with those sacrifices

"king of peace." In these great and peculiar characters the priesthood of Christ was pre-eminently distinguished. The Apostle then in the 3d verse describes the priesthood of Melchizedek by additional characters, which belong not to him as a human individual, but to the priesthood he possessed. In this sense he was "without [i. e. independent of] father, without mother, "without descent [i. e. independent of his descent] having neither beginning "of days, nor end of life [as to his priesthood;] but being made like unto the "Son of God, abideth a priest continually."—Vide Macknight's very clear illustration of this passage, in his View and Illustration prefixed to this chapter. "Like Melchizedek, Christ is a king as well as a priest, being "the Son of God and Lord of all. He is also king of righteousness, "to promote which is the object of his moral government. He is also "king of peace, reconciling sinners to God, and to one another. Like "Melchizedek, Christ is not descended from parents who were priests, "but derives his priesthood from the special designation of God, independent "of all limitations of descent; and his priesthood is of a nature so excellent as "to have no companion nor successor in it, but he liveth for ever to execute it "himself. Like Melchizedek, Christ's priesthood did not, as that of the "Levites, begin at thirty and end at fifty years; but he exercised it from the "first, and retains it through his whole existence. And finally, like Melchi-"zedek, he acts as priest, not for one particular nation, but for all the true "worshippers of God."

* Heb. vii. 11, 12. † Heb. x. 1—10.

‡ "The Law having a shadow of good things to come, "and not the very "image of the things." On these words it is remarked, "The word εἰκὼν rendered image," seems from the tenour of the Apostle's argument, to be used for the essential or substantial form of a thing, i. e. for the very thing itself, as opposed to its σκιὰ "shadow or delineation;" so it is paralleled to σῶμα "the body of substance," which the Apostle elsewhere opposes in like

"which they offered year by year continually, make the comers "thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be "offered; because that the worshippers once purged, should "have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices "there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should "take away sins. Wherefore, when *he* [*the promised Redeemer predicted by the Psalmist in the fortieth Psalm*] cometh into the "world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but "a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt-offerings, and sacri-"fices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, "I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do "thy will, O God. Above, when he said, Sacrifice, and offer-"ing, and burnt-offerings, and offering for sin, thou wouldest "not, neither hadst thou pleasure therein (which are offered by "the Law) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering "of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Here again I refer my readers to the writings of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, for a full exposition of the accurate harmony and inseparable connexion between the two dispensations. It is not consistent with the plan of this Work (already extended beyond my original intention) to discuss the subject at large. I only wish very briefly to prove, that the Prophets who lived under the Mosaic Law, foresaw its abrogation, and acknowledged it was intended to introduce the Gospel scheme, to

manner to its σκια or "shadow," Col. ii. 17. Accordingly the Syriac version explains εἰκόνα by the "*substance*," and Chrysostom by the "truth or "reality" as opposed to "types or emblems." Cicero has used almost the same expression in the same sense: "Nos veri juris germanæ justitiæ "solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus, umbra et imaginibus uti-"mur." De Officiis, lib. iii. c. xvii. The Apostle means to illustrate the imperfection of the Law, that it could not bring men to perfection, that the good things it promised were but a shadow of the great realities secured by Christ, the veriest sketch or outline, in comparison of the perfect and exact picture. Vide Dodd, Macknight, Heylin, and Wolfius on Heb. x. 1. and Suicer's Thesaurus, and Parkhurst on the word Εἰκων.—It is necessary to remark, that in the words "a body hast thou prepared me," the Apostle follows the Septuagint, and not the Hebrew text as it now stands. But for the probability of a corruption in the Hebrew text, consult Dr. Thomas Randolph's comparison of the citations in the New Testament, with the Hebrew and the Septuagint, No. 159. pp. 22 & 44. and the authors by him referred to.

which, as more perfect and universal, it was destined to give place; while on the other hand, the inspired preachers of the Gospel refer to the Mosaic institutions, as intended to prefigure and prepare for the Gospel of Christ, who came "not to "destroy, but to fulfil the Law and the Prophets."

I shall close the series of proofs on this head, by the clear and explicit declaration of the Prophet Jeremiah, * which is also appealed to by the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

This Prophet foretels the propagation of a pure and spiritual religion, the abolition of legal ordinances, the call of the Gentiles, and the final restoration of Israel. Calling upon "back-"sliding Israel" to return from her transgressions and idolatries, the Prophet encourages their repentance by declaring, "I will "give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you "with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to "pass when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those "days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the "covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind; neither "shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither "shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call "Jerusalem the Throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall "be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: "neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of "their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk "with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out "of the land of the north, to the land that I have given for an "inheritance to their fathers." † And still more expressly in a subsequent chapter, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, "that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and "with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that "I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the "hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my "covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, "saith the Lord:) But this shall be the covenant that I will "make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the "Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in "their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my

* Compare Jerem. iii. 15 to 18. and xxxi. particularly ver. 31 to 34. with Heb. x. 15.

† Jerm. iii. 15—18.

"people. And they shall teach no more every man his neigh-
"bour, and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord;
"for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the
"greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their ini-
"quity, and will remember their sin no more." * According to this prediction, the ancient Levitical covenant was to be dissolved, and the ordinances of Moses to be succeeded by a Law not in any degree typical, but entirely promotive of real virtue; not requiring ceremonies to preserve it, but in its very essence practical and influential, regulating the temper, and written in the heart.

* Jerem. xxxi. 31—34.

SECT. II.—*The Law and the Prophets not only professedly designed to introduce the Gospel, but did in* FACT *prepare the way for it—Necessity of the Law as a preparation for the Gospel, shewn by considering the probable state of the world, if Judaism had never existed—Extreme difficulty of introducing true religion in such a state of mankind—Such universal degeneracy prevented by the Jewish dispensation—Proved by a brief view of the facts adduced in this Work—Adherence of the Jews to their Law, proves the reality of a providential interposition—The prophecies delivered by Moses on this subject prove the same—The Law was typical and figurative of the Gospel—Instances—The moral character of the Law prepared for the Gospel—The connexion of the two schemes shewn by various instances—The Jews employed as the immediate instruments for introducing the Gospel—Rejection of the Gospel by the mass of the Jewish nation does not disprove the connexion of the Law and the Gospel—Confirms the proof from prophecy—and from miracles.*

GALATIANS iii. 24.

"The Law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ."

IN the last Section, I endeavoured to prove the consistency and the connexion of the Jewish and Christian schemes, by adducing passages from the Law and the Prophets, shewing that Judaism was from the first intended to introduce that Messiah "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed;" that the Jewish Lawgiver himself intimated that God would

raise up another Prophet like unto himself, and consequently a Lawgiver, with authority to promulgate a *new Law*; and that the Prophets expressly foretold that the Mosaic ritual was to give place to a new religion of a perfectly spiritual kind, and calculated to embrace all the nations of the earth; declaring all this with increasing clearness, as the era of this great change approached. While on the other hand, our Lord and his Apostles expressly refer to those predictions, as plainly pointing out the approach, describing the character, and establishing the divine original, of the Gospel. I now proceed to evince, that as the Law and the Prophets were thus avowedly designed to predict and introduce the Gospel of Christ; so they did *in fact accomplish this design*, their pre-existence being indispensably necessary to prepare for the reception of that Gospel, and in a variety of ways illustrating its importance and facilitating its promulgation.

To place this conclusion in a clear light, let us reflect what would probably have been the situation of mankind, as to religion and morality, if *no such nation* or system as *the Jewish had existed*, before the appearance of our Lord. It seems certain that the whole world would have been sunk in the most gross idolatry, and an almost total ignorance of the principles of natural religion.* The very idea of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe would have been obliterated from the minds of men; or at most, thought of only by a few speculative philosophers, who had never ventured to inculcate the necessity of confining adoration to the one true God, or openly to condemn the absurdities and profanations of idolatry, which would have prevailed over the world uncensured, we may almost say unsuspected of error or depravity; since no purer system would have existed, to which an appeal might have been made, as clearly true, or supported by any acknowledged authority.

In such a state of religious blindness all expectations of a future retribution would have appeared ridiculous or incredible, from the falsehoods and extravagancies with which that opinion had been universally encumbered and disgraced. The evidence

* Vide Part II. the entire Lect. I. and Lect. II.; Part III. Lect. I. sect. i. and Lect. II. sect. i.

from *prophecy* could not have existed; and any appeal to *miracles* would have been disregarded or discredited, from the multitude of lying wonders which had usurped that name, without a single instance of any plainly supernatural interposition.

Had the world been permitted to sink thus universally into ignorance, idolatry and depravity; almost deprived of all ideas of true religion, and totally estranged from every feeling of pure morality; without any fixed principles to recur to on these subjects, nay almost without a language in which to speak of them; it seems nearly impossible to conceive any means by which mankind could have been instructed or reformed, without utterly subverting the course of nature, and forcibly controlling the moral character of man. Darkness would have overspread the earth, and thick darkness the nations; and amidst this universal moral chaos, no spot could have been found, on which the foundation of the Church of God could have been laid; no nation or tribe or family, who, if the standard of true religion were reared, could be expected to rally round it and support the sacred cause.

A degeneracy so fatal and irremediable was effectually prevented by the operation of the Jewish scheme. It has appeared in the progress of this Work, that when the world was rapidly sinking into idolatry with all its profanations and crimes, the pure principles of that patriarchal religion which had originally enlightened mankind, were preserved in the family of Abraham by the transmission of parental instruction until that family became a nation: that then this nation, which would otherwise have been hurried away by the resistless torrent of universal corruption, was placed under the immediate government of Jehovah, as their national Lord and King; rescued from Egypt and settled in Canaan, by a series of miraculous interpositions, which exhibited an irrefragable proof of the power, the providence, and the majesty of the true God, as well as the impotence and nullity of those base idols who usurped his honour in a deluded world.

To preserve this nation as a lasting monument of the divine supremacy, and a permanent asylum, where the truths of religion and the principles of morals might take refuge, and be preserved for a more favourable period, when their salutary influence might be again extended to all mankind with effect,

by the promised Messiah, "in whom all nations were to be blessed," the Mosaic Law was given; which, in this infancy of human reason and human virtue, was to act as the "schoolmaster to bring men to Christ;" a task which it effected by a variety of means which can here be only briefly hinted at.

First it maintained the radical principles of true theology;* while it clothed them in such a form, and promulgated them in such circumstances, as, without detracting in the slightest particular from their purity and truth, rendered them interesting and attractive to a nation, which could scarcely have been induced to attend to any mere abstract doctrines concerning the being and attributes of the Deity, if he had not authorized them to look up to Him as their peculiar, national and guardian God.

The same Law inculcated the principles of pure morality, with a similar attention to the feelings and the character of the Jewish nation;† enforcing the entire system by temporal sanctions, ‡ which alone were capable of influencing a people, short-sighted, incredulous, attached to present objects, and habituated from the example of the rest of mankind, to consider temporal prosperity and success as the criterion of the power and fidelity of that God, who allowed them to consider him as their national and peculiar Lord and King.

Such a system could be carried into effect only by a particular Providence § proportioning the visible prosperity both of the state and of individuals, to their obedience to the divine Law. The continued display of this wonderful providential interference supplied a perpetually increasing proof of the power, the justice, and the mercy, of Jehovah; and exhibited the most awful and instructive examples to mankind, of the general conduct of God's moral government. ‖

The Mosaic Law not only promulgated a system of true religion and pure morality, and supported that system by the most powerful sanctions; but it guarded it from the contagion of that idolatry and vice which universally prevailed, by a corresponding system of peculiar laws and manners, rites and ceremonies,

* Vide Part II. Lect. I. † Ib. Lect. II. III. & IV.
‡ Vide supra, Part III. Lect. III. sect. i. ii.
§ Ib. Part III. Lect. II. the entire.
‖ Vide the last Lecture; also, Part III. Lect. III. sect. i.

calculated to form a barrier between the chosen people and the idolatrous world: * while by the multitude of its rites, the magnificence, first of the sanctuary, and afterwards of the temple, the solemnity and attraction of its festivals, and finally by the influence of the Priests and Levites, who were set apart as the public instructors of the nation in morals and religion, it supplied the means of counteracting the attractions of idolatry.

Further, the Mosaic institution combining the civil government, the national religion, the tenure of private property, and the regulations of domestic life in one connected scheme; † all whose parts tended to one object, the permanence of the entire system: It effectually secured that object, notwithstanding the crimes and errors of the chosen people, their idolatries and apostacies both private and public, which no system of moral government could totally prevent; amidst the powerful temptations from without, and the wrong propensities from within, necessarily arising from the general state of the world, and the peculiar character of the Jewish people, during the entire period from Moses to Christ.

If it be objected, that nothing but a pure and spiritual worship is worthy of God, and that the combination of moral precepts with ritual observances was inconsistent and incredible; I would answer, with a late ingenious writer, that the natural progress of human improvement had not yet brought any nation of the earth, perhaps, certainly not the Israelites, to the capacity of a worship purely spiritual. To this fact their early history gives ample evidence. But if they could have been formed to it, such a worship, consisting in pious sentiments, and the natural, spontaneous, and unprescribed expressions of them, would not have formed a more proper test for the purpose of exhibiting a proof by way of specimen of the moral government of God, than pure moral merit would have been; it would have been equally difficult to ascertain the reality and purity of either; the one would have been as latent and unobservable as the other; either of them would have required a penetration, attention, and comprehension of mind, which men do not acquire either early or easily, but only with care and

* Vide Part I. Lect. VI. and Part II. Lect. II. III. IV.

† Part I. Lect. IV. and Part II. Lect. II. III. IV.

exertion, and after numerous successive generations; and both of them would have been greatly debased in the measure of their worth, by such a connexion, by being placed in such a relation to a national, temporal, external prosperity. For these and various other reasons, the test by which the distribution of national good or evil should be regulated, ought not to have been in a purely spiritual worship alone: it was wiser to place it in an external ritual.

But we are still to view this scheme in another light, clearly illustrative of its divine original, as introductory to the Gospel. And here we must observe, that the chief rites and festivals of the Mosaic ritual were not only calculated to commemorate the leading interpositions of God, in the deliverance and settlement of the nation, and to exclude the infection of idolatry; * but that they had a prospective signification, and were clearly typical and figurative of the Messiah's character and kingdom. †

This typical character of the ritual Law has been illustrated by so many eminent writers, and, above all, has been so clearly established by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that I need only touch on it; and observe, that the whole system of bloody sacrifices, which had plainly preceded the Mosaic institutions, and leads us, when tracing its origin to the very earliest revelations of God to man, ‡ as it served to awaken in the minds of the offerers a strong sense of the danger of sin, and the punishment it merited, even unto death; so it most evidently prefigured that great sacrifice, by which Christians "are sanctified, through the offering of "the body of Jesus Christ once for all." §

* Vide Vol. I. p. 160. et seq.

† This typical significance of Judaism has been fully and learnedly expounded by the Rev. Samuel Mather, a clergyman of Dublin, in a quarto volume published in 1683, entitled, The Figures and Types of the Old Testament, &c. Consult particularly *the Gospel of the perpetual Types*, p. 208 to 218; also, the Gospel of the Sacrifices and Offerings, p. 232 to 254; and the Gospel of the Jewish Festivals, from 520 to 545. See also the learned Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, book ii. sect. ii. "On the Connexion "between Judaism and Christianity by means of Types," vol. ii. p. 40 to 173; also, the learned Outram de Sacrificiis, particularly lib. i. cap. xviii. and lib. ii. cap. vii.; also Hartley on the Truth of Christianity, Propos. 30, 31, 32 & 33.

‡ Vide Dr. Magee's work on Atonement and Sacrifice, Sermon II. with the notes.

§ Heb. x. 10.

This prefiguration of the Messiah is peculiarly remarkable in the ceremonies observed in the great day of atonement, * when "the High Priest entered once a year into the Holy of Holies, "not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the "errors of the people, being (says the Apostle to the Hebrews) "the figure of him, who by his own blood entered in once †, "into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for "us:" a redemption which, as the Apostle explains, essentially implies "a purification of the conscience from dead works to "serve the living God."

Of the three great festivals of the Jewish Law, two, the Passover, and the feast of Pentecost, as they were *commemorative* of the deliverance from Egypt, and the promulgation of the Law on Sinai; so were they as clearly *figurative* of the sacrifice of Christ, and the effusion of the Spirit by which the Gospel was disseminated over the world. ‡

* Vide Lev. xvi. with Heb. ix. & x. the twenty-two first verses; Dr. Magee, from p. 67 to 69; and Outram ut supra.

† Compare Heb. ix. 12 and 25.

‡ The analogy between the Paschal Sacrifice and our Lord's suffering, between the delivery of the Law and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, has been remarked from the earliest period of the Gospel. But it has not, as far as I can recollect, been noticed by any, that our not having as yet discovered any event in the history of Christianity, corresponding to that commemorated in the Feast of Tabernacles, or any Christian festival similar to that feast, instead of supplying an instance of dissimilitude between the two systems, strongly confirms their perfect analogy, when we consider the further progress of the Gospel, which the word of prophecy leads us to expect.

This observation has been suggested to me by my learned friend the Rev. Dr. Elrington, late Fellow (now Provost) of Trinity College, Dublin; and who, in the course of sermons he preached and published as Donnellan's Lecturer, in the year 1796, has so ably illustrated the truth of the Gospel miracles, and exposed the sophistry of Hume. As his ideas on the present topic appear to me both original and just, I annex his own statement of them.

"That the Jews annually observed three great festivals at Jerusalem, and "that two of them, the Passover and the Feast of Pentecost, had a reference "to events which were to happen under the Christian dispensation, is well "known. Hence we are led to consider, whether the third solemnity was "of a similar nature, and has received a similar completion. This was the "Feast of Tabernacles, beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month; "when for seven days all that were Israelites born were to dwell in booths, "in remembrance of their dwelling in booths when they were brought out "of the land of Egypt, and on the eighth day to return to their houses, cele-"brating it with great rejoicings. Levit. xxiii. 34, 35, 36, 42, 43.

"Now it is evident, that no circumstance attending the establishment of "Christianity had any resemblance to the journey through the wilderness, "and the dwelling there under tents; nor has any attempt, I believe, been

The Jewish Law not only prepared for the introduction of the Gospel, by its types and prophecies, and by preserving the principles of sound theology and pure morals, which, without it, would probably have been almost irrecoverably banished from the earth; but by the strictness of its moral prohibitions, and its denunciations of God's displeasure against sin, it probed and exposed the moral maladies of man. It proved to him, by decisive experience, his proneness to violate the commands of his God, even when most distinctly promulgated, and his culpable neglect of duties of the most obvious necessity; so that he could not but acknowledge how infinitely improbable it was, that he could by his own unassisted strength escape sin; and that consequently, far from being able to claim eternal happiness, as a reward which human merit might challenge from divine justice, he was liable to condemnation and punishment.

Thus the Law prepared men to hail with fervent gratitude the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, which offers the aid of the divine Spirit to assist the weakness of those who will humbly implore and diligently improve it; and proclaims free pardon to

" made to prove a similarity of the sort. We must therefore either admit " that this Feast of Tabernacles differs from the others, in having no " prospective reference; or we must seek in some future event its com- " pletion or antitype. And it will probably incline us to this latter opinion, " when we consider, that the Jews will undoubtedly be brought back to " Judæa when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in; and if we sup- " pose the season of the Feast of Tabernacles to coincide with that of their " future return, as it appears to have done with their return from the Baby- " lonish Captivity, we shall have a fulfilment of the three Jewish festivals " completed finally in the conversion of the Jews to Christianity; which, " with their return to their own land, will furnish a perpetual cause for " thanksgiving and religious observance.

" Of the reference of this festival to the final restoration of the Jews, " some of their traditions and practices may perhaps afford a further confir- " mation. It was their custom on the last day of the feast, to bring water " from the fountain of Siloah, which the priests poured on the altar, singing " the words of Isaiah, ch. xii. ver. 3. *With joy shall ye draw water from the* " *fountain of salvation;* which words the Targum interprets, *With joy shall* " *ye receive a new doctrine from the elect of the just;* and they appear, from " the preceding chapter, to relate to the final restoration of the Jews. The " feast itself was also called HOSANNA, *save we beseech thee;* and was the time " when our Lord spoke the remarkable words mentioned in St. John, chap. " vii. ver. 37, 38. marking the relation which the ceremony of pouring out " the water bore to his ministry. And amongst the traditions of the Jews " we find, that the defeat of Gog and Magog shall fall out upon the Feast of " Tabernacles, or that the consequent seven months cleansing of the land " (Ezek. chap. xxxix. ver. 12.) shall terminate at that period; and there " seems little reason to doubt the reference of that prophecy to the final " restoration of the Jews."

all, who, repenting of their sins, and acknowledging their own inability to escape from their power, or expiate their guilt, embrace with faith and joy those gracious terms of pardon and acceptance, offered by the mediation of that Jesus, "who was "delivered for their offences, and raised again for their justifica-"tion;" * who "still liveth to make intercession for us:" † thus "destroying the power of death," ‡ and "bringing life and immortality to light." § Not that in the Gospel the doctrine of a resurrection and a future retribution was *first* promulgated (for they were intimated by Moses, and clearly taught by the Prophets) but because the *means of securing life and immortality were then first clearly and satisfactorily ascertained,* ‖ and placed within the reach of all who would embrace the gracious offers of pardon and mercy held out by the Redeemer of man.

* Rom. iv. 25. † Heb. vii. 25.

‡ Heb. ii. 14. § 2 Tim. i. 10.

‖ I am aware that commentators in general interpret this verse (2 Tim. i. 10.) solely of the Gospel's bringing to light the *doctrine* of life and immortality; and Warburton advances as an irrefutable argument, that as it was reserved to be so brought to light by the Gospel, it must have been unknown under the Old Testament. Now as I think I have proved it was not unknown under the Old Testament (vide supra, Part III. Lect. IV) it follows it was not reserved to be brought to light by the Gospel alone. Undoubtedly, where the Jewish religion was unknown, the doctrine was first clearly promulgated by the Gospel; and even amongst the Jews it was supported by such additional miracles and examples, as threw round it a brightness of conviction, compared with which, the assent previously yielded to it was doubtful and dim. So that this expression may bear the sense usually given it, without supporting the inference which Warburton would deduce from it. But I cannot but think the Apostle meant to express much more than a bare promulgation of the *doctrine* of life and immortality. He encourages his beloved son in the Gospel to perseverance in the faith, for which he himself cheerfully sustained persecution and bonds; and for this purpose he describes in the strongest terms the blessedness of a true Christian's temper, views and hopes. "God (says he) hath not given us the "spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," i. e. strength to resist evil, derived from the assistance of the Holy Spirit; accompanied with a sincere and active love of God, and a just discrimination of things, which clearly recognizes the superiority of future and heavenly objects above present and sensual: thus comprehensively describing a perfect Christian, whose will is rectified, whose affections are purified, and whose understanding is spiritually enlightened. To attain or preserve such a character is the most glorious object of human ambition; "Be not thou "therefore (says the Apostle) ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of "me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, "according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an "holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own "purpose, and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world

Such is the strict unity of design, and the accurate harmony of parts, between the Jewish and the Christian schemes, so clearly establishing their common and heavenly original.* As the period approached when the promised Messiah was to appear, we have seen this unity and harmony display itself in more illustrious characters. The visible and immediate interference of Providence in rewarding virtue and punishing vice, seems to have been gradually withdrawn from amongst the Jews after the Babylonish Captivity;† and the expectations of a future retribution, now plainly ‡ and authoritatively established by their sacred writers, left to operate in its room; so that at the time of our Lord's appearance, these expectations were a leading article of the popular creed; and when promulgated anew with additional miracles, to impress them on mankind in general, found amongst the Jews minds prepared to receive them, wherever worldly views or vicious propensities did not resist and defeat the influence of truth.

"began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus "Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to "light through the Gospel: whereunto I am appointed a Preacher, and an "Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." Now is it not evident that the Apostle here means to unfold the whole scheme of the Gospel, the eternal purpose of God to admit in the fulness of time the Gentiles into his church, notwithstanding their antecedent idolatries and crimes; the abolition of death, by depriving it of its terrors and its sting, and redeeming men from the power of death eternal; and aid to secure eternal life, arising from that spirit of power and love and religious wisdom, with which divine grace supplies the true Christian? It is not then the simple promulgation of the doctrine of a future life, which the Apostle here understands, but a promulgation of it, accompanied with such clear instruction how to seek, and such merciful assistance to obtain life and immortality, as were now first brought to light by the Gospel. "Thus," to adopt the words of the pious Doddridge, "hath Jesus Christ in effect abolished death, hath deposed it from its tyran-"nical empire, and thrown a light on the important doctrine of life and im-"mortality by the Gospel, which gives us a more express assurance and a "more lively view of it, than any former dispensation had ever done or "could possibly do."—Vide also Parkhurst's exposition of this passage, as quoted by Dodd in loc.; Bishop Sherlock's opinion in opposition to Warburton, illustrated and vindicated by Dr. Parry, in his defence of the Bishop of London; and the judicious Benson, in his paraphrase and notes on this passage, who admits "the Jews had expectations of a resurrection even be-"fore the coming of our Saviour;" and refers to Matt. xxii. 32. and Dan. xii. 2. "but the more full and clear discovery is owing to the Christian Re-"velation."

* Vide Hartley on the truth of Christianity, Propos. 26, 35, 36, 37, 38.

† Vide Warburton, Book iv. sect. iv.; 1 Maccabees, ii. 38. and vi. from 49 to 60.

‡ Vide supra, Part III. Lect. IV. particularly sect. ii.

Thus also the gracious intention of Providence, to admit the heathen world into the church, and for this purpose abrogate that ritual which formed the wall of separation excluding them, was gradually more plainly notified;* until by the last Prophets it was distinctly announced, and as we perceive, clearly understood by all whom national pride and prejudice did not induce to close their eyes against the light. Of this we find signal instances in John the Baptist and the devout Cornelius; and certainly there were multitudes of others amongst the Jews and Gentiles, who like them looked for salvation by the appearance of that Messiah, "who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, "and the glory of his people Israel," and we know that the whole nation of the Samaritans acknowledged the same truth.

As this glorious era drew near, we see various events crowding on our observance preparatory to its arrival; the translation of the Jewish Scriptures into Greek; the general expectation of a great king to arise in Judea, diffused over the East; the increasing light of philosophy; the extension of the Roman empire—all combine to prepare for, and facilitate the promulgation of the Gospel. But still the Jews are the more immediate instruments whom God meant to employ in effecting his gracious purposes; and accordingly we find that after the Babylonish Captivity, they are rapidly prepared to act their part in the great and important change which now approached.

It is certain that in the interval between the Babylonish Captivity and the advent of the Messiah, the Jews were gradually settled and multiplied, not only in Egypt, but in all Asia, Greece, Italy, and the western regions of Europe. The Jewish Historian cites numerous decrees of the magistrates, the senate, and the emperors of Rome, encouraging and protecting them.† Julius Cæsar ordered that tables of brass, containing his decrees to this effect, should be fixed up in the Capitol, and communicated to the quæstors and prætors where the Jews resided. We find similar decrees formed by, or directed to, the governors and people of Ephesus, Sardis and Miletus, Athens and Pergamus, as well as the islands of the Ægean Sea; and we have

* Vide the first Section of this Lecture.

† Vide Josephus' Antiquities, Book xiv. ch. x. where extracts from the original decrees are given; also Book xvi. ch. ii. and xix. ch. v.; also, Lardner's Credibility, Part I. Book ii. ch. ii. & iii.

the most decided classical authorities* to prove the multitude of the Jews at Rome, the number of their proselytes, and the popularity of their opinions.

As the Jews were thus dispersed and situated, so that they might most generally spread their opinions, there is also reason to believe that their general character and conduct, especially in heathen countries, were such as to recommend them; they seem in general to have been humble and rational, peaceable and industrious. "Natural justice (says their historian) is most to the "advantage of all men equally, Greeks and Barbarians, to "which our Laws have the greatest regard; and thereby render "us, if we abide in them after a pure manner, benevolent and "friendly to all men; on which account we have reason to ex-"pect the like return from others, and to inform them that they "ought not to esteem difference of positive institutions, a suffi-"cient cause of alienation, but join with us in the pursuit of "virtue and probity."†

By this providential distribution and settlement of the Jews in almost every part of the civilized world, they were every where to be found carrying with them their Law and their Prophets, establishing their synagogues, celebrating their sabbaths, bearing constant testimony to the unity, the supremacy, and the providence of God, in opposition to Pagan superstition and idolatry; and numbers of them declaring their firm belief in a

* Vide Horat. Sat. lib. i. sat. ix. line 69, 70, 71; and still more expressly, sat. iv. line 140.

Multa poëtarum veniet manus, auxilio quæ
Sit mihi (nam multò plures sumus) ac veluti
Judæi, cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.

And sat. v. line 100, where the "credat Judæus Apella" is used as a proverbial expression, opposed to the incredulity of the Epicureans. The sarcasm of Persius, sat. v. 184,

Recutitaque sabbata palles,

equally shews the prevalence of the Jewish opinions. Vide also Martial's Epigram, lib. iv. 4: "Jejunia sabbatariorum," &c.; and various passages of Juvenal, sat. iii. line 13, sat. vi. 158, and from line 541 to 546, and particularly sat. xiv. from 95 to 105.—Vide also Lardner's Credibility, Part I. Book i. ch. ii. on the State of the Jews in Judea, which gives also much information on the general state of the nation in Egypt and elsewhere; but especially his second chapter, on the State of the Jews out of Judea.—Vide also Tacitus Annal. lib. ii. cap. lxxxv.; Suetonius Vita Tiberii, cap. xxxvi.

† Vide similar sentiments in the conclusion of the second book against Apion: and Antiquities, Book iv. ch. viii.

future state of retribution; while all maintained a constant connexion with Jerusalem, attended there at the three great festivals, whenever it was practicable, sent thither their pious and charitable contributions, and universally gloried in the expectation of that Messiah, "who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of his people Israel."

The influence of such a preparation for the reception and diffusion of the Gospel must have been great and salutary: every where its preachers found synagogues, where the Law and the Prophets were expounded each sabbath; every where they found not only Jews, but proselytes of righteousness, who, without binding themselves under the heavy yoke of the Mosaic ritual, acknowledged the great truths of natural religion, and complied with the sacred precepts of the moral Law; every where some, like the officer of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, * studied the Scriptures; others there were, like the devout Cornelius, † who "feared God, with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Hence the preachers of Christianity almost every where instantly found hearers, who could understand and feel their addresses. Thus at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas were invited to preach by the rulers of the synagogue; and after the Jews went out of it, "the "Gentiles and religious proselytes besought that these words "might be preached to them the next sabbath; and on that day "came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God."‡ Thus also at Iconium, when these Apostles went to the synagogue, they found an audience not only of Jews but of Gentiles (who were undoubtedly such proselytes); and "when they had "preached, a multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed." § Thus again at Thessalonica, "of the Jews some believed, and "of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief "women not a few." ‖ And finally, we see that "at Jerusalem "were dwelling Jews, devout men, out of every nation under "heaven," who were attracted by the very first sound of the Gospel of Christ; for when the Apostles "were filled with the "Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the "Spirit gave them utterance, the multitude came together, and

* Acts viii. 27, &c. † Ibid. x. ‡ Ibid. xiii. 15, 42 and 44.
§ Ibid. xvii. 1—4. ‖ Ibid. xiv. 1.

"were confounded, because that every man heard them speak "in his own language—Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, "and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappa- "docia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in "Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers "of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, exclaim- "ed, We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful "works of God." *

Of this assembly, which may be considered as a collective representation of all the nations of the earth, three thousand souls converted on this memorable day, and at least five thousand † on a second illustrious miracle within a few days after, formed a body of missionaries, to bear to their respective countries the tidings of the appearance of that promised Messiah, "in whom all the kindreds of the earth were to be blessed;" a promise which in these signal instances began to be so conspicuously verified.

The rejection of Christianity by the great bulk of the Jewish nation, assuredly forms no valid objection to the connexion and consistency of the Law and the Gospel.‡ This rejection was not obscurely intimated by the Prophets, § was expressly predicted by our Lord, ‖ and was the natural consequence of that national ambition, that carnal and worldly temper, which induced the great bulk of the Jewish people to misunderstand and misinterpret the prophecies, by directing their attention exclusively to those predictions which speak of the supremacy and extent of the Messiah's kingdom, and which they understood of a temporal instead of a spiritual reign, by which the Jewish nation, as they vainly imagined, was to be rescued from the Roman yoke, and exalted to the dominion of the world; while they

* Acts ii. 4—11. † Ibid. iv. 4.

‡ I refer for a full refutation of the objection against the truth of the Gospel history, derived from the rejection of Christianity by the Jews, to two Sermons lately preached in the Chapel of Trinity College, by Dr. Elrington, and to be immediately published, at the desire of the Provost and Senior Fellows. I have only taken such a brief view of it as my subject indispensably required.—Vide also Lardner's Collection of Jewish Testimonies, ch. ii. and vii.

§ Vide Doddridge's Lectures, Lect. cxxx. Prop. 112; Isaiah xlix. 16, 21. lii. the entire liii. 1 to 9; and the passages quoted in the first section of this Lecture.

‖ Matt. xvi. 21. xxvi. 2. and the parallel passages.

wilfully overlooked the equally clear * predictions of the same Messiah's humiliation and sufferings, and the express declarations, that the new † dispensation should not be confined to one chosen people, like the old, but should embrace without distinction all nations, who, according to the original promise of God to the great Patriarch Abraham, were to "be blessed in his seed." But the true interpretation and application of the prophecies is not obscured, or the proof of divine foreknowledge and co-operation in the establishment of the Gospel arising from them, subverted, by the errors or the obstinacy of the Jews. The prophecies are open to our inspection as well as theirs; and when, by combining the temporal humiliation with the spiritual dominion of the Messiah, both which the Gospel attests, we perceive all the predictions respecting him accomplished, however apparently opposite; the proof thence resulting is the more decisive, as it was more difficult for mere human sagacity to anticipate, or mere human agency to produce, so extraordinary a coincidence.

The rejection of the Gospel by the Jews is indeed so far from weakening, that it greatly confirms the proof from prophecy, by establishing the authenticity and uncorruptedness of these great records of divine truth, of which the Jews are unsuspected, because hostile vouchers. Had their nation universally or generally embraced the Gospel at its first publication, the sceptic might, with some plausibility, allege, that the *prophecies might have been fabricated or altered, to fit them to the events;* the CONTRARY IS NOW CERTAIN. And so great is the importance of this circumstance (as appears to me) to establish the truth of Christianity, that I firmly believe it to be one of the great causes, why the national conversion of the Jews is delayed "until the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in." ‡ They are to continue the guardians of the prophetic records till these shall have had their contents examined, and their application ascertained, by every other nation in the world.

A little reflection will also evince, that the rejection of Christianity by the Jewish nation, does not subvert, but on the con-

* Vide particularly Psalm xxii. and Isaiah liii.

† Vide the preceding Section of this Lecture.

‡ Rom. xi. 25.

trary confirms, the *certainty* of the *miracles* recorded in the Gospel history. It not only appears from that history,* but from the admission of the Jews themselves,† that the cotemporaries of these miracles did not deny their performance, but on the contrary admitted it; though they would not upon their evidence embrace the Gospel, because they conceived this contrary to the Mosaic Law, whose obligation their carnal and ambitious views led them to believe was eternal, and which they conceived no miracles could prove was abrogated.‡ They therefore contented themselves with asserting, that the miracles of Christ and his Apostles must be ascribed to magical influence, diabolical agency, or the mysterious potency of the ineffable name of God, which they conceived our Lord had learned to pronounce. But these opinions of the Jews affect not the reality or greatness of the Gospel miracles: we can judge as clearly as they could possibly do, whether the Scriptures describe the Mosaic Law as of strictly eternal obligation, or on the contrary represent it as designed to introduce a more perfect and universal religion; and our improved reason and philosophic knowledge reject without hesitation the wild and absurd causes to which they imputed works, which the fair and candid reasoners amongst themselves confessed, "no man could do, except God was with him."

In truth, the hostility of the Jewish nation to Christianity, from the first, confirms the truth of the Gospel miracles. Had the Jews been universally or even generally converted by them, the sceptic might argue, with some appearance of probability, that the facts had been invented or exaggerated to gratify the national propensity, credited without examination or proof, and all inquiry into them checked, at the only period when inquiry could have detected imposition. On the contrary, we are now certain, that the Gospel miracles were wrought in the presence of enemies,§ and thus subjected to the severest scrutiny, and

* Matt. ix. 34. xii. 24. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. and the corresponding passages.

† Vide Wagenseil's Tela Ignea Satanæ; and Lardner's Jewish Testimonies, ch. v. and vii.

‡ Vide Limborchi Collatio cum Orobio, 3 Script. Judæi, Num. iii. p. 131.

§ The Author begs leave to refer to a Work published by him in the year 1798, "*to prove the Apostles and Evangelists were not Enthusiasts,*" for a detail of particular circumstances attending the Gospel miracles, chap. i. particularly sect. iv. and chap. ii. sect. 1.

that they carried with them conviction to multitudes, notwithstanding the fiercest opposition which national prejudice, bigotry and vice could excite, and the strictest research which could be formed by the most vigilant hostility.

Undoubtedly the most powerful cause of the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews, was the deplorably vicious and depraved character of the nation at large, so strongly attested by their own historian, and incontrovertibly established by the facts which he relates.* And this depravity, it may be said, disproves every thing I have adduced, to shew that Judaism was designed or adapted to prepare for the reception of the Gospel. But let it be remembered, that notwithstanding this allowed depravity of the Jews in general, it has been proved † that amongst them were preserved the principles of true theology and pure morals, which the Gospel adopts, and which were banished from all mankind beside. Let it be remembered, that amongst them and the various descriptions of persons connected with and enlightened by their religion, the Gospel found its first teachers and hearers, its first converts and missionaries; and that the noblest and purest principles of piety adorned these great instruments, employed by God for dispensing his mercies to mankind—instruments which, through every other region of the world, would have been sought in vain. Finally, let us recollect the great probability that the Gospel attracted, and as it were detached from the Jewish nation every thing pure and pious, candid and virtuous; and left behind the dregs and dross alone, the hypocritical Pharisees, the Epicurean Sadducees, the worldly-minded Herodians, the fierce zealots, the depraved and seditious rabble: thus, according to the intimation of its divine Founder, sifting the chaff from the wheat, separating the tares from the good seed, "gathering the one into his barn, and consuming the other "with fire unquenchable."‡

In truth, after the Jewish nation had obstinately rejected the Messiah, rebelled against his authority, and in opposition to his religion maintained that the perpetual observance of the Mosaic

* Vide Josephus's History of the Jewish War, particularly Books iv. v. and vi.; or Lardner's judicious view of his testimony to the fulfilment of our Lord's predictions, in his Jewish Testimonies, ch. iii.

† Vide supra, Part II.

‡ Matt. iii. 12. xiii. 30.

ritual was an indispensable condition of divine acceptance, and their own nation exclusively the chosen people of God; it was indispensably necessary to put an end to their national establishment, and destroy that temple with which the observance of their ritual was essentially connected, in order to maintain the universal sovereignty of the Messiah, in opposition to their rebellion, as well as to prevent all possibility of corrupting Christianity by the adoption of their errors, and of their now burthensome because useless ceremonies. Whoever observes the struggles of the Judaizing Christians thus to encumber the religion of Christ, and the extreme difficulty with which their efforts were resisted, even by direct revelation and Apostolic authority, in the very first and purest era of the church, will easily perceive the necessity of this precaution, to preserve the purity and extend the dominion of the Gospel; and that in this view, "through the fall of the Jews, salvation is come unto the "Gentiles."*

* Romans xi. 11.

LECTURE VII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF THE JEWS EXHIBITS THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY.

Evidence from Prophecy applicable to Judaism—Prophecy of Moses—As to the prosperity of the Jews—As to the punishments they were to suffer—Considered in their variety—Their sources—Their duration—The face of their country—These predictions antecedent to the events—Clearly applicable to them—Not such as human wisdom or political sagacity would have dictated—Instanced in the three Jewish Feasts—The Sabbatic Year—The remoteness of their destroyers—The circumstances attending the destruction of Jerusalem—In their subsequent dispersion—In their present state and sufferings.

THE delivery and fulfilment of prophecy is so important an evidence of a divine authority, and so clear in the Mosaic revelation, that it has been justly considered a defect in this work, that, in exhibiting the internal evidence for the divine origin of the Jewish religion, it did not advert, except very briefly and incidentally, to this species of proof. To supply this defect, it is intended in this and the next Lecture to exhibit a summary view of the leading principles which predict the fortunes of the chosen people of God; to point out their past accomplishment; consider what expectations, as to the future destiny of this singular people, these prophecies excite; and how far the present circumstances of their situation appear to coincide with these expectations; and to indicate a providential arrangement of human affairs, even now visibly advancing to that great consummation, when, to use the language of the sublime and evangelic Isaiah, "it shall come to pass in the last "days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be estab- "lished in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above "the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peo- "ple shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the moun-

"tain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he "will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the "Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the na- "tions, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat "their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning- "hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither "shall they learn war any more." *

The great prophecy describing most compendiously, but at the same time most clearly, the fortune of the house of Israel, is that pronounced by their inspired Lawgiver on his last address to the assembled tribes, at the close of their forty years journeying in the Wilderness, and before they had entered upon the land of their inheritance. On this solemn occasion, the Legislator assures the assembled nation, "It shall come to pass "if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord "thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which "I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set "thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these "blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou "shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God." † The Lawgiver then enumerates every species of prosperity which could bless a people, in their persons, their goods, the fruit of their cattle, and the fruit of their ground: security from all enemies; "and all the people of the earth shall see that thou "art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid "of thee:" security even from the apparently inevitable contingencies of unfavourable seasons, parching heats, or excessive rains, so common in such a climate; "The Lord shall "open unto thee his good treasure," says the Prophet, "the "heaven to give thee rain into thy land in his season, and to "bless all the work of thine hand."

It is obvious to remark, how entirely unconnected are such blessings, as security from warlike enemies, and the enjoyment of rain from heaven, with the observance of a religious code; and how idle and unmeaning such promises would have appeared, to any people not deeply impressed, by immediate and clear experience, with the conviction, that a supernatural power

* Isaiah, ii. 2—4.

dictated, and would certainly execute, the promises thus held out. The sacred history records the enjoyment of such prosperity as is thus predicted, during that period of the Jewish state when the divine Law was most zealously observed, the latter part of the reign of David, and the entire reign of Solomon. But unhappily, the intervals of pious obedience and its attendant blessings have been far exceeded, as the prophetic Lawgiver foresaw, by the calamitous periods of disobedience and its attendant punishments. Let us then direct our attention to the nature and extent of these prophetic menaces, and observe their wonderful accomplishment.

The first circumstance which strikes the mind on reviewing these menaces, is their great extent and variety. There is no circumstance of distress, no aggravation of sorrow, applicable to the nation collectively, or to the individuals who compose it, which is not included in the prophetic denunciation: "It shall "come to pass," says their Lawgiver to the Jewish nation, "if "thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to "observe and do all his commandments, and his statutes, which "I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come "upon thee, and overtake thee." * He then enumerates a fearful catalogue of evils which should overwhelm them, in the city and field; on their persons by disease; in their property, whether the produce of their flocks, or of the earth: "The "Lord (says he) shall send upon thee vexation and rebuke, in "all that thou settest thine hand unto to do it, until thou be "destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the "wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me." †

Nor were their calamities to stop here; they were to be inflicted also by the operation of the elements, which, obedient to the will of the Great Jehovah, were to combine in punishing this rebellious race: "The pestilence, and the consumption, "the fever, and blasting, and mildew," were to pursue them until they should perish. "Thy heaven (says the Prophet) "that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is "under thee shall be iron; and the Lord shall make the rain of "thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down "upon thee, until thou be destroyed." Even this was not yet

* Deut. xxviii. 15 to the end. † Ib. xxviii. 20—24.

the worst; their punishment was to be compelled by the instrumentality of man; their enemies were to be resistless and destructive: "The Lord (says their legislator) shall cause thee "to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way "against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be "removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." These enemies were not to be found only amongst their immediate neighbours, whose hostility might naturally be expected: "The Lord (says the Prophet) "shall bring a nation against thee from afar, "from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a na- "tion whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of "fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the "old, nor shew favour to the young." * A description so exactly correspondent, first to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, and still more to the legions of Rome: "And he shall besiege "thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come "down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land." The miseries thus to be inflicted, it was foretold, should exceed in severity the ordinary measure of human calamities. Almost unparalleled sufferings from war and famine are predicted with an exactness, which the narrative of history, while it exactly accords with, cannot exceed: "Thou shalt eat (says the Pro- "phet) the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and "of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, "in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies "shall distress thee." A prediction so dreadfully verified at the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and still more dreadfully at its final destruction by the Romans.

Another most signal feature in the prophetic picture, is the *universal* and *protracted* dispersion of the nation; the scorn and cruelty they were to experience in the various lands whither they were to go into captivity, and the keenness of their sensations under this maltreatment: "Ye shall be plucked from the "land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall "scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth "even unto the other; and among these nations thou shalt find "no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the "Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of

* Deut. xxviii. 49 to the end.

"eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt "before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt "have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt "say, Would to God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, "Would to God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart "wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes "which thou shalt see." *

Another circumstance in the manifestation of the divine displeasure against his offending people, more extraordinary still, if any thing can be more extraordinary, is to be found in the signal and permanent alteration which God would produce in the face of the very country they were then preparing to inhabit, and the very nature of the soil they were about to cultivate, at the moment their Legislator invited them to go up and possess it, as being the land the Lord had promised their fathers, "a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands." He predicted, that if they despised the statutes, and departed from the worship of their God, that land should become barren and desolate to such a degree, says the Lawgiver, "that the genera- "tions to come of their children, and the stranger that shall "come from a far land, when they shall see the plagues of that "land, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth "therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, even "all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto "this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then "men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of "the Lord God of their fathers, made with them when he "brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went "and served other gods: and the Lord rooted them out of their "land in anger, and cast them into another land, as it is this "day." †

But however severe and signal the chastisements of this wayward people, they were not to terminate in a final and irremediable destruction: "Yet for all that (says their God) when "they be in the land of their enemies I will not cast them away, "neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to "break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their

* Deut. xxviii. 63 to the end. † Ib. xxix. 22—28.

"God." * Thus the divine truth is pledged for the perpetual preservation of some remnant at least of the Jewish race as a distinct people, however apparently dispersed and abandoned; and this promise has been hitherto accomplished during 3,000 years from its delivery, a duration of distinct existence unparalleled in the history of any other nation.

There are some circumstances necessary to establish the full force of the evidence by prophecy—even that the prediction preceded the event, and that it is accurately applicable to it—of which no possible doubt can in the present instance exist. The predictions of the Jewish Lawgiver were certainly delivered above 3,000 years ago; and they are as directly descriptive of the present desolation of Judea, the present wide-spread dispersion and miserable sufferings of the Jews, and at the same time their preservation as a distinct nation, notwithstanding that dispersion and these sufferings, as any historical narrative is descriptive of the scenes which it relates.

It now remains to inquire, whether the particulars predicted can be supposed to have been predicted at hazard, and to have occurred in the common course of events, so as to preclude the necessity of a divine foreknowledge in the Prophet, and a providential arrangement in the event. This, it may be said, is not an improbable case; it is not difficult to conceive that these predictions may have been dictated by mere human sagacity, collecting from past experience the general causes which influence national prosperity or decay, and applying these principles to the particular situation and circumstances of the nation, whose fortunes the Lawgiver, who assumed the character of a prophet, wished to influence, by appearing to predict. And it may be urged, that instances of this kind are not wanting in history; even the lawgiver of Sparta employed a similar expedient, when he procured an oracle to sanction his laws, by declaring, that while the Spartans continued to obey them, they would be happy.

It might further be asserted, that if any man foretells the destruction of any city, or the ruin of any nation, as an event certainly to take place in the indefinite lapse of ages, it is highly probable the prediction would at some period be verified: And

* Levit. xxvi. 44.

as all human institutions, whether civil or religious, are liable to degeneracy and abuse, and every people at some era of its history sinks into corruption; any man assuming the character of a prophet, may foretel the ultimate destruction of any city or people, with a moral certainty that his prediction will be ultimately fulfilled; and he may assert this destruction will be the consequence of degeneracy and corruption, with little likelihood of his conjecture being falsified by the event: And what more, it will be asked, has been done by the Jewish Lawgiver? To meet this objection, I shall now endeavour to prove that the tenor of the Mosaic prediction is so entirely different from the conclusions of political experience; and that the circumstances attending the Jewish nation, thus clearly foretold so many ages since, were in their own nature so singular as not to be within the common range of human conjecture, to this hour exhibiting phenomena unparalleled in the history of the world;—so as to indicate most clearly the interference of a special Providence controlling all events, and rendering them subservient to the purpose of its moral government, and the advancement of its religious dispensations.

Let us then impartially consider: Is not the distinction between the prophetic declarations of the Jewish Lawgiver, and the conjectures of mere political sagacity, clear and decided? The mere human statesman may, by long experience and acute penetration, perceive the connexion in the state he contemplates, between the form of its government, the character of its laws, and the manners of its inhabitants; he may calculate the probable influence of all these causes on its military power; the stability of its constitution; its domestic tranquillity; its commercial exertion; its failure or success in agriculture; and various other circumstances on which the public prosperity of the state, and the private happiness of individuals, must materially depend. But the Jewish Lawgiver refers not to political causes: He does not tell his countrymen, that if they violate his agrarian law, they would overturn the balance of their government; that if they do not preserve their military enrolments, they cannot resist the attacks of their enemies: he does not warn them, that if they neglect agriculture and commerce, they would sink into poverty, or be exposed to famine: he does

not exhort them to observe the progress of their neighbours in the art of war, and adopt their improvements: he does not caution them to study the subtleties of policy, and to cultivate the friendship of some of the adjoining states as a protection against the ambition of others; he displays no anxiety to rouse in them a spirit of military glory in order to secure them from invasion, or to refine them by literary pursuits in order to exalt their character: His cautions, his warnings, his counsels, are all directed to this *single point*—their *obedience to the Great Jehovah.* "All these things (says he) shall come upon you, if thou "wilt not observe to do all the words of this law written in "this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful "name, THE LORD THY GOD." * Now it is remarkable, in this view of the subject, that many particulars of this law were, according to the usual maxims of human wisdom, directly hostile to the temporal greatness of the people. All the particularities of their ritual, of their peculiar food, of their singular customs, tended to exclude or to offend strangers, and thus impede commerce. They were forbidden to multiply horses; † and thus deprived of cavalry and chariots, a species of force so important. The assembly of all their adult males three times in the year at a place where the Lord chose to place his Name, necessarily left their frontiers as often exposed to every invader; and against this obvious and imminent danger their Lawgiver held out no securiy, but this assurance of their God, "I will "cast out the nations from before thee, and enlarge thy borders: "neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go "up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." ‡ Thus also the observance of the sabbatical year, which required them to leave their lands untilled every seventh year, seemed to expose them as often to the attacks of famine; against which their Lawgiver held out no security but the assurance of the same God, "I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth "year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years." § No man will assert that any mere human sagacity could foresee that the neglect of either of these last precepts had naturally any tendency to hasten the ruin of the Jewish state, or prolong

* Deut. xxviii. 58.
† Ib. xvii. 16.
‡ Exod. xxxiv. 24.
§ Levit. xxv. 21.

the captivity of the Jewish people; yet the Lawgiver in his prophetic denunciation lays particular stress on the last precept, relating to the sabbatical year, and affirms, that its violation would materially conduce to hasten the era and prolong the period of their captivity and their country's desolation: "I "will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which "dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you "among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and "your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall "the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and "ye be in your enemies land; even then shall the land rest, "and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall "rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt "upon it." * Thus this signal prophecy connects events with causes which would seem, on the testimony of general experience, calculated to produce effects decidedly different from, or even directly contrary to, those which the prediction declares would take place; so that their accomplishment may be adduced as a proof, not only of a supernatural foresight displayed in predicting contingent, though ordinary, occurrences, but as an instance of special providential interference, regulating the fortunes of this extraordinary people so as to exhibit a decisive testimony of supernatural power directing and controlling all events to effect its eternal purposes.

Let us next examine whether, in the various calamities which befel the Jews, but especially in the final destruction of Jerusalem and dispersion of the nation, there were not a variety of circumstances of an extraordinary nature, whose concurrence forms a combination which no conjectures grounded on common experience could anticipate. Their Legislator knew they were to be *surrounded* by warlike and hostile nations, whom he foretells in other places would be employed as instruments for their correction; yet their final destruction he declares should be effected by a nation whom God would bring *from far*, even from the ends of the earth. Now this was strictly applicable to the Romans, who, with respect to the Jews, came almost from the remotest part of civilized Europe. And it has even been observed, that Vespasian and Adrian, the two great conquerors

* Levit. xxvi. 32—35.

and destroyers of Judea, both came from commanding the Roman legions *in Britain*, which, to the Jews, was nearly the very remotest known island of the western world. "A nation (their "Lawgiver adds) whose language they should not understand;" a character improbable from the intermixture of dialects in the various Asiatic nations, but strictly true of the Romans, whose language, in its sound, its construction, and its written character, is to this day most different from the language of the Hebrews; a nation, he further describes, "of fierce countenance, "which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favor to "the young." This too was most strictly fulfilled by the Romans, who, though in general disposed to spare the nations they conquered, yet to the Jews, at the time of their final destruction, they shewed themselves cruel and implacable. In truth, the destruction of Jerusalem exhibited every scene of horror which imagination can conceive. The besieged divided into three* parties, and butchering one another, first destroying each the provisions of the rest, and then all perishing by the agonies of famine—yet still all ferocious and unyielding in their opposition to their common enemy. Rejecting every overture of peace, fulfilling the prediction of the prophet, "that they should trust in their strong holds, yet trust in vain," they provoked the fury of the Roman legions to such a degree, that no authority could restrain it.†

In Jerusalem, during the whole siege, according to Josephus, eleven hundred thousand perished; and during the war, ninety-seven thousand were made slaves. And here another remarkable prediction of their Lawgiver was fulfilled: "the Lord (says "he) shall send thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way "whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: "and there ye shall be offered for sale unto your enemies for "bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you."‡ This prediction was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, says Josephus:§ Of the captives above seventeen years of age, he sent many bound to the works in Egypt; those under that age were sold; but so little care was taken of those miserable

* Josephus of the Jewish War, Book v. chap. i.

† Josephus, Book vi. chap. ix. sect. 3 & 4. ‡ Deut. xxviii. 68.

§ Josephus, Book vi. chap. ix. sect. 2.

captives, that eleven thousand of them perished for want. And the historian adds, that "they were sold with their wives and "children at the lowest price, there being many to be sold, and "but few purchasers." And after their last overthrow by Adrian, we have the unquestioned testimony of history, that many thousands were sold; and those who could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants.* Now such an event as this cannot surely be said to come within the common course of human conjecture, and its accomplishment at two remote periods within the regular and natural progress of human events: Surely we may here conclude there exists the prescience of Inspiration, and the distinct agency of Providence.

The *universal dispersion* of this singular people forms a still more extraordinary feature in their fortune: "The Lord shall "scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth "even unto the other," says their Legislator.† And how wonderfully is this prediction, at this hour, verified! From the burning sands of Africa, to the frozen mountains of Poland—from the confines of China to the British isles; every country has been traversed by the wanderings, and has witnessed the sufferings of this unhappy race; every where we see the traces of their commercial activity; every where they exhibit proofs of their unshaken adherence to their Law. At one period, before the refinement of modern civilization had opened such general intercourse amongst the nations of the earth, that the established merchant can command universal credit, the Jews monopolized the management of almost all remote pecuniary transactions, because, from their universal dispersion, their common language and national connexion, the orders of the Jewish money-brokers could find in every country, and almost every city within the range of commerce, other Jews by whom they would be received and respected. And still do they continue to exist in almost every nation of the habitable globe. On this point we have recent satisfactory testimonies from the East.

"During my residence in the East," says the very respectable

* Vide Basnage, Book vi. chap. ix. sect. 26 and 28.

† Deut. xxviii. 64.—Vide the particulars of this dispersion, Basnage, Books vi. and vii.

Dr. Buchanan,* "my mind was much occupied with the present state and circumstances of the Jews. I visited them in "the different provinces of the British dominions."—"By the "events of the late war in India, a colony of Jews have become "subject to Great Britain, the colony of the white and black "Jews of Cochin: I visited this colony; its number is calculated to be 16,000. The number of the Jews in the United "Kingdom is not reputed to be greater than 14,000; so that "our Jewish subjects in the East are yet more numerous than "in the West. The white Jews live on the sea coast—the black "Jews live chiefly in the interior; they call themselves Beni-"Israel, for their ancestors did not belong to Judah, but to the "kingdom of Israel; they consider themselves to be descended "from those tribes who were carried away at the first captivity. "In some parts of the East (for they are dispersed through it) "they never heard of the second Temple; they never heard of "the coming of the Messiah: some of them possess only the "Pentateuch and Psalms, and the Book of Job."—"The Jews "of Cochin (he adds) may be addressed with advantage on the "subject of the Christian religion, for they have the evidence "of the Syrian Christians before them; these ancient Christians "live in their vicinity, and are our witnesses. At one place in "the interior of the country which I visited, there is a Jewish "synagogue and a Christian church in the same Hindoo village; "they stand opposite to each other, as it were the Law and the "Gospel, bearing testimony to the truth in the presence of the "heathen world."

Surely we cannot but see, in this statement, a clear and irrefragable proof of the accomplishment of those predictions, which foretel the dispersion of the Jewish race from one end of the earth even to the other; and yet the facility with which Providence may prepare arrangements for again reuniting them, when we see two bodies of Jews so numerous, and from each other so remote, as those of our United Kingdom and those of Cochin in Asia, brought as it were into contact, by being placed under the dominion, and capable of being influenced by the measures,

* Vide Dr. Buchanan's Speech as to the State of the Jews in the East, delivered at a public Meeting of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, in December, 1809, published in London in 1810.

of the same Christian power. Can it be conceived that such predictions should have been the mere effusions of random conjecture, and such accomplishment the effect of blind chance?

Next to the universal dispersion of the Jewish race, the prophet foretells the miseries and sufferings which should every where attend them, so emphatically expressed by the declaration, "I will draw out a sword after you;" and in the prophetic Legislator's final address to the people,* "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind." On almost the slightest glance into the records of history, we find melancholy proofs of the accuracy with which this prediction has been fulfilled. The learned Historian, who has exhibited so accurate a view of the fortunes of the Jews from the destruction of Jerusalem to the beginning of the 18th century, observes, that in former captivities† "God was careful to preserve the nation in a body, by conveying them to the same place; it was all united together in the plains of Goshen, preparatory to its departure from Egypt. In the Babylonish captivity, one part inhabited the same cities, and another peopled both the banks of the same river; so that when Cyrus determined to restore them, he reunited them with ease. But at the destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards in the war of Adrian, the nation, weakened by unheard-of massacres, was dispersed into all the provinces of the empire: this dispersion continues to this hour, and has even extended to the ten tribes, of whom it is difficult now to discover the remains in the East, where they were once numerous and considerable." In the earlier period of their dispersion, they frequently rebelled, and struggled against the oppressions they sustained, which only terminated in rendering them more severe. Thus they were prohibited, by the most rigorous edicts, from appearing at Jerusalem, to which they always turned with unceasing and unabated desire.‡ Wherever we find them recovering any degree of populousness, tranquillity,

* Deut. xxviii. 64, 65. † Basnage, Book vi. ch. i. sect. 2.
‡ Ibid. Book vi. ch. ix. sect. 27 and 28.

and respect, we see the transitory gleam is soon obscured by the darkest shades of sorrow. If in the tenth century they enjoyed in the East a temporary tranquillity, with an establishment of academies and schools, it was speedily destroyed: "When the "house of the Abassides (says their historian), which also fa- "vored them, sunk from its authority, the sultan who succeeded "to their power, resolved to exterminate the Jews: he shut up "their academies, which have never since been opened—ba- "nished their profession, killed the prince of the captivity with "his family, and raised so severe a persecution as to reduce the "Jews to a handful of men, disperse them into the deserts of "Arabia, and drive them into the western world."* Nor could they in the western world find rest. When a military fanaticism collected the Europeans in thousands to recover the Holy Land, the same spirit led them to persecute with indiscriminate fury the nation which in that land had crucified the Lord of the Christians, and still regarded his followers with contempt or aversion. "This persecution (says their historian) was universal—it was "felt alike in Germany and in England, in France and Spain, "and Italy; the public cry was, Come, let us massacre them "in such a manner that the name of Israel shall be no more "remembered. They put to death great numbers, but still "greater numbers, driven to despair by such violence, destroyed "themselves."† In other instances, avarice and injustice were as destructive to them as in this instance fanaticism. Universally engaged in commerce, they accumulated wealth, and wealth drew down upon them pillage and extortion. Well may we here adopt the language of their elaborate historian: "We here be- "hold the greatest prodigy, in the preservation of the Jewish "nation, in despite of all the calamities it has sustained for 1700 "years: we here see a church, which has been hated and per- "secuted for 1700 years, still subsisting and numerous: kings "have often employed the severity of edicts, and the hands of "the executioner, to destroy it; the seditious multitude has "perpetrated massacres and persecutions infinitely more tragical "than the princes; both kings and people, heathens, Christians, "and Mahometans, however opposite in other points, have

* Basnage, Book vii. ch. iv. sect. 13.

† Ibid. Book vii. ch. vi. sect. 32.

"united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not "effected it. The bush of Moses, surrounded by flames, has "always burnt without consuming. Dispersed through all parts "of the civilized world; driven from or persecuted wherever "they have appeared, they have from age to age endured misery "and persecution, and waded through torrents of their own "blood; yet they still exist in spite of the disgrace, and hatred, "and suffering, which attend them; while there remains nothing "of the greatest monarchies antecedent to the era of their de-"struction, but the name."*

It is peculiarly interesting, and must greatly confirm the conclusions for which we have adduced these facts, to observe the exact conformity of the impressions which these events have made on the minds of the Jews themselves, with these conclusions; a conformity most conspicuously shewn in a tract, cited in the Transactions of the Sanhedrim of Jews assembled at Paris a few years since, by order of Buonaparte, and entitled, "An Appeal to the Justice of Kings and Nations," written by a Jew. The author, after describing, in all the pathos of eloquence, the sufferings of his nation, by persecution, extortion, calumny, the pious rage of the crusaders, the general fury of prejudice and intolerance; after declaring, that it seems as if they were allowed to survive the destruction of their country, only to see the most odious imputations laid to their charge; to stand as the constant object of the grossest and most shocking injustice, as a mark for the insulting finger of scorn, as a sport to the most inveterate hatred: he asks, "What is our guilt? is "it that generous constancy which we have manifested in de-"fending the laws of our fathers? But this constancy ought "to have entitled us to the admiration of all nations; and it has "only sharpened against us the daggers of persecution. Braving "all kinds of torments, the pangs of death, and the still more "terrible pangs of life, we alone have withstood the impetuous "torrents of time, sweeping indiscriminately in its course na-"tions, religions, and countries. What is become of those cele-"brated empires, whose very name still excites our admiration, "by the ideas of splendid greatness attached to them, and whose "power controlled the whole surface of the known globe? they

* Basnage, Book vi. ch. i. sect. 1.

"are only remembered as monuments of the vanity of human "greatness. Rome and Greece are no more! their descendants, "mixed with other nations, have lost even the traces of their "origin; while a population of a few millions of men, so often "subjugated, stands the test of 3,000 revolving years, and the "fiery ordeal of fifteen centuries of persecution. We still pre- "serve laws, which were given us in the first days of the world, "in the infancy of nature! The last followers of that heathen "religion which had embraced the universe, have disappeared "these fifteen centuries, and our temples are still standing! "We alone have been spared by the indiscriminating hand of "time, like a column left standing amidst the wreck of worlds "and the ruins of nature. The history of our nation connects "the present times with the first ages of the world, by the "testimony which it gives of the existence of these early periods: "it begins at the cradle of mankind, and its remnants are "likely to be preserved to the day of universal destruction." *

* P. 68 of "Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim," translated by F. D. Kirwan, Esq. Lond. 1807.

CONCLUDING LECTURE.

ON THE FUTURE CONVERSION AND RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

Expectations of the Jews on this subject—justified by Prophecy—Prophecy of Moses—of Isaiah—Predicts a second restoration—and different in its circumstances from the Return from Babylon—After a larger period—more permanent—This restoration is to be connected with the extension of the Gospel—Present circumstances of the world consistent with this expectation—As to Palestine—Commercial character of the Jewish nation—The origin and circumstances of the Parisian Sanhedrim—Its tendency to remove Jewish prejudices—Society in England to promote Christianity among the Jews—Other circumstances in the present state of the world, which seem to prepare the way for the accomplishment of the prophecies as to the final triumph of the Gospel—Conclusion.

WHEN we contemplate the singular fortunes of the Jewish people, from its first origin to the present hour; when we compare their unparalleled dispersion and sufferings, with their equally unparalleled preservation as a distinct nation; we cannot but feel a strong curiosity to discover what will probably be their future destiny. We find the expectations they themselves entertain, as extraordinary as their present situation. "No "where," says a respectable and discerning observer, who had seen them in the most distant regions, "no where do they de-"spair of returning to their country, and beholding their pro-"mised Messiah." And again: "I have had many interesting "conferences with the Jews, on the subject of their present "state; and have been much struck with two circumstances, "their constant reference to the desolation of Jerusalem, and "their confident hope that it will be one day rebuilt. The de-"solation of the Holy City is ever present to the minds of the "Jews, when the subject is concerning themselves as a nation; "for, though without a king, and without a country, they con-"stantly speak of the unity of their nation. Distance of time

"and place seems to have no effect in obliterating the remem-
"brance of the desolation. I often thought of the verse in the
"Psalm, 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand
"forget her cunning.' They speak of Palestine as being close
"at hand, and easily accessible. It is become an ordinance
"of the Rabbins in some places, that when a man builds a new
"house, he shall leave a small part of it unfinished, as an em-
"blem of ruin, and write on it these words, *Zecher Lachorchan*,
"i. e. IN MEMORY OF THE DESOLATION." * And undoubtedly the language of prophecy justifies their looking forward to some most signal and favourable change, some illustrious restoration of their nation to divine favour and temporal prosperity. This change, I have no doubt, will consist primarily in the conversion of the great bulk of the entire nation, the descendants of the Ten Tribes, as well as of the Two, to Christianity, and their consequent restoration to the privileges and the blessings of the chosen people of God: and I am persuaded that this will also be attended by the return of the great body of the Jews to Palestine, and their settlement there, with the enjoyment of national independence and great temporal prosperity.† But the belief of this last I would not contend for as a fact, or impose it as a tenet of faith: it does not appear so indisputable or so important as the former conclusion. As to the times and circumstances of either event, the Christian will, I conceive, also pronounce his opinion with great caution and reserve. In order to prove the reality of a superintending Providence, it may be sufficient, that prophecy, antecedent to the events, should produce a general conviction and expectation that some grand era in the Divine dispensations is rapidly approaching; and should exhibit such prophetic characters as will clearly prove the Divine knowledge and arrangement of all the circumstances attending it, *after the event has taken place;* though not such as to enable any individual to foretel, with precision, the year in which it is to begin, or the exact process by which it is to be introduced. To establish the truth of the prophecy, rather than to render uninspired individuals, at any particular period,

* Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, 2d edit. p. 212.

† This is the sentiment of the judicious and excellent Dr. Buchanan; vide his Christian Researches concerning the Jews, p. 220, 2d edit.

prophets, seems to be the design of the sacred Scriptures.* Directed by these principles, let us proceed to examine the prophetic writings on these interesting topics.

The return of the Jews to Palestine, their consequent re-establishment as a nation, and their restoration from a state of punishment for their national offences, to a state of reconciliation and favour with God, are generally combined in the prophetic writings. The earliest intimation of both is found in the last prophetic address of their inspired Lawgiver: he assures them "whenever thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, "thou and thy children, and shalt obey his voice with all thine "heart, and with all thy soul; then the Lord thy God will turn "thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return "and gather thee from all the nations whither he hath scattered "thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts "of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee: "And he will bring thee into the land which thy fathers pos-"sessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, "and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God "will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to "love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy "soul, that thou mayest live."† In this prediction we perceive the clearest declaration that the house of Israel is never to be excluded from the peculiar protection of Providence, never irrevocably to forfeit the privileges secured to them in the original covenant with their great ancestor, but is to be for ever preserved a distinct people; and that, however dispersed, whenever they returned to their God, they would certainly be restored to his favour, and as a nation re-established in their country: And it is not obscurely intimated that a period would come, when such a restoration from a wide-spread dispersion would take place, attended with a general conversion to sincere and vital religion, and a consequent enjoyment of national prosperity, far exceeding, both in degree and duration, any they had ever before experienced. This was such a disclosure of the divine purposes as was best adapted to the object which the revelation,

* Such was the feeling of Sir Isaac Newton. Vide Newton on the Apocalypse, Part II. chap. i. p. 249. Printed in Dublin 1733.

† Deut. xxx. 1—6.

at that time communicated to the inspired Lawgiver, was intended to promote. While it enlarged on the immediate rewards and punishments annexed to immediate obedience or transgression, with that fulness and force necessary to make a due impression on the minds of a short-sighted and carnal people, it at the same time opened the more remote dispensations of Providence, sufficiently to prove to the most distant ages the clearness of the divine foreknowledge.* and the harmony of the divine economy.

The subsequent Prophets predict the final and permanent restoration of the Jews, in characters which render it impossible to confound it with that which took place at the close of the captivity in Babylon.—Isaiah, who lived before that captivity, most clearly distinguishes them: "It shall come to pass (says "he) in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again a SECOND "TIME to recover the remnant of his people." † It was to be a

* Dr. Buchanan remarks, "The prophecy that the Jews should become "an 'astonishment, and a proverb, and a by-word among all the nations, "whither the Lord shall lead thee,' must afford a contemplation to Infidelity, "to the end of time. This punishment they were to suffer, because they "had shed the blood of the Saviour of the world. Now it is not surprising "that Christians should reproach them for such a crime. But how should "we expect that they would be 'trodden down of the heathen world,' who "never heard of such a Saviour? Behold the Hindoo, at this day, punishing "the Jew, without knowing the crime of which he has been guilty!" Christian Researches, p. 193, 2d edit.

† Isaiah xi. 10 to 16.—David Levi, in his Dissertation on the Prophecies, sums up the expectations he collects from the prophecies of Isaiah in fourteen particulars, vol. ii. p. 92:—"1st, Vengeance on the enemies of the Jews by God—2dly, Especially on Edom and Bolsrath, that is Rome—3, A general restoration of Israel—4, Particularly of the Ten Tribes—5, Conformable to that of Egypt—6, The appointed time of Redemption will not be prevented even by the great number of sinners amongst the Jews, who will be cut off—7, This Redemption is not to take place till after a great length of time—8, The Shechinah, and the spirit of prophecy, will be restored—9, The apostatized, and those who have quitted the nation, will be restored to it—10, A king of the lineage of David, and called by his name, will reign over the whole nation—11, They will never go into captivity any more—12, The majority of the nations will acknowledge the unity of God, and earnestly desire to be instructed in his Law—13, Peace will then reign in all the earth—14, About the time of the Redemption, the resurrection of the dead will take place; a general one; but only of those who are most distinguished either for piety or wickedness."—Vide vol. i. p. 180 to 200—Of these expectations, some are evidently extravagant and ill founded. But the very existence of any expectations of such a restoration is a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of any other people; and unaccountable, except by the influence of Revelation. And the extraordinary revival and diffusion of such expectations at this period, even by this very work, is certainly remarkable.

restoration from a captivity extending to the remote regions of the globe, where the dominion of Babylon was never felt, even "from the islands of the sea and the four corners of the earth." It was to embrace, not merely the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which were restored after the Seventy years Captivity, but the posterity of the Ten Tribes, which had been carried captive so long before, and which have not yet been restored, or the place of their dispersion accurately ascertained. This prophecy declares, that God will "set up an ensign for the nations, and "will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the "dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." This event was to put an end to the disunion of the rival kingdoms of Judah and Israel; "The envy also of Ephraim (says the pro-"phet) shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut "off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex "Ephraim."

In another passage of the same Prophet, a circumstance is predicted to attend the restoration of the people of God, which it is utterly impossible to apply to the return from Babylon: "Who are these (asks the prophet, concerning the captives,) "who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their "windows? Surely (he answers) the isles shall wait for me, and "the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their "silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord "thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath "glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy "walls; and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my "wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on "thee." * Whatever may be the accomplishment of these predictions, it is clear it has never yet taken place; the circumstances here described have never yet been realized: they form a clear distinction between the restoration which has already occurred, and that to which we are here taught to look forward.

Another particular also appears to be intimated by the evangelical prophet, perfectly applicable to the present circumstances of the Hebrew nation, but not to those which had existed before the restoration from Babylon. It is intimated, that the divine interposition in their favour, which the prophet here particu-

* Isaiah lx. 8—10.

larizes, would take place after an apparently long cessation from any such interposition, after they had abode "many days without a king, and without a priest, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." * After "the Lord had taken rest, and reposed in his dwelling-place, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest:" † after he had waited, "that he might be gracious unto them:" ‡ after he had "a long time holden his peace, and been still, and refrained himself;" he is represented as, "going forth as a mighty man; and crying aloud, and prevailing over his enemies: And I will bring (says he) the blind by a way that they knew not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." §

With still greater clearness, Isaiah, in another passage, declares it to be the peculiar office of Christ "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; and to give those that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." It is added, "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." ‖ Now the interval of seventy years captivity in Babylon could not be termed a desolation of "*many generations*;" and it was marked by distinguished manifestations of God's wisdom and power in behalf of his chosen people, and his revealed law. The deliverance of the three illustrious martyrs, who, rather than join in the impious

* Hosea iii. 4, 5. and Poli Synopsin in locum.
† Isaiah xviii. 4. ‡ Ib. xxx. 18. § Isaiah xliii. 13—16.
‖ Isaiah lxi. 1—8.

idolatry of Nebuchadnezzar, exposed themselves to his utmost rage, and defied his utmost power; the punishment and humiliation of that proud monarch; the signal deliverance of the Jews, by Esther, from the hatred of Haman; and, above all, the prophetic wisdom, miraculous deliverance, and signal exaltation of Daniel—these, and many other facts of the same nature, illumined the gloom of that captivity with an effulgence of divine glory, which manifested the presence of Jehovah as the guardian King of Israel. But now for near eighteen hundred years this chosen people appear as if deserted by their God; no prophet has arisen among them, to instruct, to warn, or to console; no hero has appeared to rescue them. Banished from their temple and their country, persecution and distress every where have embittered their exile. So often have they been deluded to their destruction by false prophets and false Messiahs, they have sometimes almost despaired of beholding the object of their fondest hope, the long-promised and long-expected Deliverer. True it is, the careful and religious observer, amidst such an apparent abandonment of this unhappy race, can discern the secret, but constant, guardian hand of Providence, which preserves, nay multiplies, this extraordinary people, notwithstanding all their sufferings. But yet their situation exactly corresponds to this intimation, that they would seem, for a long period, to be forsaken of their God, and that their final deliverance would thus appear more signal and illustrious.

The future restoration and establishment of the Jewish nation is not to be more distinguished from the past, by the circumstances which it is declared will prepare for and attend it, than by its unprecedented permanence and extent. The language of prophecy labours to express this permanence: "For a small "moment (saith God, by the prophet, to his people) for a small "moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I "gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a "moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on "thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer" * And again in language if possible more emphatic and impressive: "The ransomed "of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and "everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and "gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." †

* Isaiah liv. 7—11. † Ibid. xxxv. 10.

But the most important, and to us the most interesting character of this restoration of the Jewish people, is its inseparable connexion with the extension of the Messiah's Kingdom to the utmost bounds of the earth; the general reception of his religion both by Jews and Gentiles; and the consequent diffusion of virtue and piety, peace and happiness, over all the nations of the world. This is the uniform language, the grand object, the final result of the entire series of prophecy, from the primary promise that "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of "the serpent;" * and the covenant with Abraham, "that in his "seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" † through every prophet, down to the declaration of the great apostle of the Gentiles, that "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel "shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion "the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." ‡ In the evangelic prophet Isaiah, the connexion of these two great events is repeatedly declared: it forms the opening and the close, the Alpha and the Omega, of his predictions. With what majesty does he call to Israel to hail the glory of that appearance of Christ; "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the "glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: "but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen "upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and "kings to the brightness of thy rising. Whereas thou hast "been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I "will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." § And again, "As the earth bringeth forth her bud, "and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it "to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and "praise to spring forth before all the nations." And with equal clearness in the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, the days "come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous "Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute "judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be "saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name,

* Genesis iii. 15. † Ibid. xxii. 18. ‡ Rom. xi. 25, 26.
§ Isaiah lx. the entire chapter.

"whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. "Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they "shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the "children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord "liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house "of Israel, out of the north country, and from all countries "whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own "land." *

Our assurance, that the predicted restoration of this chosen people to the divine favour, and their re-establishment in their country, will be ultimately completed, ought not to be shaken, even were we unable to discern any apparent preparation for it in the present circumstances of the world. Yet in times so eventful as those in which we live, when so many awful visitations of Providence prove that the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, and so many unparalleled revolutions appear to prepare for some general and signal change in the aspect of the world, the attention of the religious observer cannot but be excited: he can scarcely avoid examining, with anxious curiosity, whether any circumstances exist, which indicate the approach of this great triumph of Christianity and this unprecedented improvement in the happiness of man. In this view of the subject, we would naturally turn our attention to that country which had been the appointed residence of the chosen people of God, and which is marked out by prophecy, as the scene where Providence will hereafter display its glory by restoring their power; and we shall observe it, answering indeed the description of prophecy, by its present desolation and sterility, but at the same time open, and as it were unoccupied, and thus prepared more easily to receive whatever new inhabitants it may be destined for. We shall perceive that the Turkish power, which for so many ages has held possession of it with an iron grasp, is gradually relaxing the firmness of its hold, assailed from without by unceasing hostility, and internally sinking into weakness and decay.

The character and present situation of the Jewish people itself will, to the Christian observer, exhibit circumstances tending to shew, in a still more striking manner, the gradual prepa-

* Jerem. xxiii. 5—8.

ration by which Providence appears to open the way for the accomplishment of those great designs which prophecy announces. Of these, the first, and perhaps the most remarkable, is the universal and decided attachment of the entire nation to commercial pursuits.* In every country where they are dispersed, commerce, in some of its various branches, forms almost the sole occupation of every class. Every description of trader, from the vender of the poorest wares from house to house, to the extended money-dealer, who traffics in millions, fills its ranks from amongst the Jews; and every object of commercial exertion is pursued with such avidity, that agriculture finds scarcely any followers amongst that people, at least amongst those who are recognised as the descendants of the Two Tribes, which have formed the bulk of the nation since the captivity of the Ten Tribes, and destruction of the kingdom of Israel. This decided predilection for commerce, originally the effect of necessity, has now grown into an unalterable habit: and its tendency to facilitate their return to Palestine whenever Providence shall in other respects have prepared the way for them, is great and obvious. They have not attached themselves to any other soil; they have not taken root in any other country; their property is of that species which is most easily transferable from one territory to another. Their separation from every nation amongst whom they are dispersed, would, from this circumstance, be attended with the least possible sacrifices; their union with each other would be most prompt and easy. The connexions which this turn of character, and this species of occupation, may form between the chosen people, and such nations as shall be most distinguished for commercial exertion and naval power, may materially facilitate the accomplishment of that remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, before quoted, which declares, when speaking of the grand restoration of the people of God, "Surely the

* A remarkable testimony to the extent in which the Jews pursue commerce, occurs in a Letter of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, dated Adrianople, May 17, 1717:—"I observed," she says, "most of the rich traders "men were Jews. They have drawn the whole trade of the empire into "their own hands, partly by the firm union among themselves, and partly by "the idle temper and want of industry among the Turks," &c. &c.—Indeed in every part of the world we see their history is connected with their commerce. They were alternately encouraged from their commercial activity, and persecuted in order to plunder them of the wealth their commerce accumulated. Vid. Basnage, book vii. passim, particularly ch. xxix.

"isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to "bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, "unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of "Israel, because he hath glorified thee."

Another circumstance, not less deserving notice in the present situation of this singular people, is found in the extraordinary attention they have excited, and the unprecedented degree of consideration they have received within these few years, from the two most distinguished nations of the European world. The late Ruler of France, amidst his various extensive plans of strengthening his power and extending his dominion, turned his regard to this nation, so long despised, forsaken, and oppressed; he called together the most distinguished Jews in France and Italy; and Paris beheld the extraordinary spectacle of a representative assembly of a part of the Hebrew nation, convened by the command of a powerful European state.* It is true that, as might be naturally expected from the character of that despotic government which convened this assembly, it enjoyed little freedom or dignity. Its debates were controlled, and its resolutions dictated by the power which convoked it;† and the grand object of its formation ultimately appeared to be, to facilitate the levying of conscripts;‡ to subject their religious establishment to the control of the state; and to place their population and their property more immediately within the cognizance

* Vide Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim, convoked May 30, 1806; from the original, by M. Diogene Tama, translated by F. D. Kirwan, Esq. Lond. 1807.

† A remarkable instance of this occurs in the proceedings respecting the series of regulations for the organization of the Mosaic worship, which was agreed upon between the committee appointed by the Sanhedrim, and the commissioners of his Imperial Majesty, before it was proposed to the Assembly; and this was done with a preamble, importing its being *unanimously* adopted, though it was strongly opposed, and caused a protracted debate. Vide the work above referred to, p. 279 to 284.

‡ Amongst the regulations mentioned in the last note, is one, "That the "consistory of each district shall give annually to the government the number of the Israelitish conscripts within the district." Another, "No praying "assembly is to be formed, without being expressly authorised; and the consistory is to encourage, by all possible means, the Israelites of each district "to follow useful professions, *i. e.* husbandry and arms, and to return to government the names of those who cannot render a satisfactory account of "their means of subsistence."—"The duty of the Israelites to shed their "blood in the cause of France, with the same zeal as in defence of the holy "city," is earnestly enforced. Vide pp. 284, 287, 288.

of the government. Perhaps, also, in the questions proposed to them, and in the allurements held out to engage them in agriculture and arms,* and lead them to adopt France for their country, something of the spirit of opposition to the supposed tenor of the prophetic writings may have lurked; but however that may be, much has appeared in the transactions of that Assembly to excite the hope, that the way is gradually preparing for removing those prejudices which have so long formed an inseparable barrier between Jews and Christians. We find a strong and manly appeal in behalf of that persecuted people on one side, to the justice and toleration of Christians,† and a full avowal on the other, of the truth and force of that appeal. We discern also a constant recurrence to the original and pure principles of the Mosaic code,‡ in preference to the innovations and corruptions, the follies and the superstitions of the Talmudic laws. We perceive efforts to improve the education of their children, and particularly to diffuse more generally among them a thorough knowledge of the language of their original Scriptures, which must be a necessary preparation for their discovering the true sense of prophecy, and the accomplishment of the various predictions pointing out that Messiah, whom they expect, and we adore.§

It is no small additional proof of the controlling power by which Providence directs this chosen people to fulfil its destinies, that, notwithstanding all the apparent advantages which allure

* Vide the same Work, pp. 315 and 319. "Among the followers of our "religion, (says the president) we have too many merchants and bankers, "and too few land-owners and artificers; above all, too few husbandmen and "soldiers." p. 319.

† Vide the above Work, passim, particularly from p. 327 to 333, and from 63 to 82.

‡ Vide p. 177; also pp. 202 and 204: where the very passages adduced in the preceding Lectures, to prove the benevolence of the Mosaic Law, even toward strangers, &c. &c. are brought forward, and the precept of "Love thy "fellow-creature as thyself," insisted upon.—It is stated "that in 1808, a "Society of Dutch Jews had published their resolution, to acknowledge "only the pure and genuine Law of Moses, and to reject all those institu-"tions which till then had been called Talmudic laws. This society had nu-"merous followers.—In 1801 a plan was proposed, to assemble at Luneville "a general congress of the representatives of all the Jews scattered in all "the different countries of Europe, in order that the prejudices and prac-"tices of a baneful fanaticism should be laid aside," &c. &c. Vide p. 62; also p. 246.

§ Vide the above Work, pp. 19, 160, 213; and various other passages.

them to shake off such restraints of their Law as are inconsistent with their temporal interests; notwithstanding their apparently implicit submission, and their fulsome, and almost impious, flattery of the great Napoleon—still the grand principle which preserves, and must, while adhered to, preserve them a distinct people, that of avoiding all intermarriages with the professors of any other religion, is maintained;* a restraint which, if wholly neglected, might confound them with the mass of nations, and therefore seems inconsistent with all the declarations of prophecy, and all the plans of Providence; while at the same time the authority of this Assembly has condemned the liberty of polygamy and divorce,† an indulgence which, while permitted, presented so strong an obstacle to the reception of the strict and pure precepts of the Gospel.

Another most cheering circumstance in the transactions of this memorable Assembly, is its evident tendency to remove that bitterness of spirit, and soothe that irritation, which seventeen centuries of sufferings must have excited in the Jewish race. Their attention has on this occasion been forcibly led to recollect the favours and the kindness of Christians, that they might advance them as a precedent to justify their claim to a continuance of favours and of kindness now; and the last act of their Assembly was an open, and, I doubt not, a sincere, recognition of their gratitude for the manifold favours conferred on the Israelites in former centuries, by the Christian clergy in various parts of Europe, even in times when barbarism, ignorance, and prejudice, leagued, as they express it, together, chased the Jews from the bosom of society. And finally, I remark, that this (as they term it) Political Redemption in France, has awakened their attention to the Scriptural promises of a di-

* The third question proposed to the Assembly was, "Can a Jewess marry a Christian, or a Jew a Christian woman?" On which a long debate took place; and an answer was finally given, that "the Law did expressly forbid "marriages only with the seven nations of Canaan, and besides Arnon, Moab, "and the Egyptians, under certain limitations, and, in general, nations in "idolatry: And that, accordingly, there have been intermarriages between "Jews and Christians in France, Spain and Germany. But (it is added) we "cannot dissemble that the opinion of the Rabbies is against these marriages; "and persons married without the benediction of the Rabbies, would be considered as married *civilly*, but *not religiously*." Vide p. 154.

† Vide the answer to the first and second queries proposed to the Assembly, from p. 151 to 154.

vine deliverer, which, however they may for a moment be misapplied by temporary delusion or interested flattery, such error must be transitory as the cause which leads to it; while the spirit of investigation having been once roused, and the blindness of prejudice against the Christian name in some degree removed, we are led to hope that truth will certainly, and perhaps not very remotely, prevail.

If from the metropolis of the French we turn to that of the British Empire, we there behold the attention of the other powerful Nation, which sways the sceptre of Europe, also directed to the situation and the improvement of this so long persecuted people. This attention indeed originates from far different motives, and appears to be conducted with far different views: here the leading motives are, sincere benevolence, and the zeal of true religion; not the selfishness of ambition, or the subtlety of policy. The object has been, not to connect them with any mere human establishment, not to bind them to any single state, or bend their conscience to the dictates of any human authority; but to enlighten them with the knowledge of the ever glorious Gospel; to unite them under the dominion of their own Messiah, the Son of David the King of Israel, whose word is the word of truth, and his law the dictate of Heaven, and thus restore this once favoured race to the dignity and the freedom of the children of God. The efforts made for these truly great and truly Christian purposes are too recent, * and their operations and effects as yet too limited, to enable us to pronounce on their final effect. But, surely, much is to be hoped from such a spirit; much to be anticipated from exertions for a purpose, which the God of mercy, the common Father of the Jew and the Christian, cannot but approve. The seed of Gospel truth is now sown; and however minute and inconsiderable it may appear to human observance, we are warranted to hope that it will sink its root deep, and rear its branches high, and spread its shade *wide*, and bring forth abundant fruit.

Of a similar tendency, and inspiring similar hopes, is the in-

* The Author begs leave to refer to a Sermon preached by him in St. Andrew's Church, Dublin, the 21st April 1811, in aid of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, for a more full exposition of his views on this subject.

creasing zeal of all sincere enlightened Christians, for extending missions into the remotest regions of the heathen world; and above all for translating the Bible into the language of every region of the globe, and presenting the holy Scriptures of the New Testament to the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, * in which alone they could attract attention and respect. It is remarkable, that the progress made in such translations, within these last twenty years, † has exceeded that of a century before; and that the activity in forming Bible Societies, and extending Missions in the capital and dominions of Great Britain, within that period, has been almost incredible, when we reflect on the present tumultuous and distressed period of the world, which, as a mere political or worldly calculator would judge, tend so powerfully to divert the attention and exertions of mankind, from objects apparently speculative and remote, and confine them to the care of their immediate preservation, and immediate interest; but which, on the contrary, has roused the attention of all, who possessed any serious reflection, to the mutability of all worldly good, the supreme importance of eternal concerns, and the paramount duty of diffusing the glad tidings of the Gospel, and thus extending the dominion of purity, piety, and benevolence.

Our hopes, of the impediments which have hitherto prevented the conversion of the Jews being gradually removed, must be confirmed by the rapid spread of a spirit of toleration amongst Christians, not only towards the Jews, but towards each other. The disputes and animosities, the cruelties and persecutions, which have attended religious differences amongst Christians, have been a great stumbling-block to the Jews, ‡ who could

* This translation began to be put to press last year; and Dr. Buchanan remarks, that Mr. Lee, a scholar of enlarged views, who published a tract called "Israel Redux," in the year 1677, has calculated, from the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, that in the year 1811 the times of happiness to Israel should begin. Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 226.

† Mr. Vansittart, in his Letters in defence of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which they effect with (as it seems to me) an irresistible strength of argument, and certainly with the most admirable Christian temper, states, "that this Establishment has done more for the diffusion of Christianity, than has been effected in the same time in any age since the Apostles; as it has in seven years been the means of preaching the Gospel in FIFTY-FOUR LANGUAGES." He afterwards proves it has extended to fifty-eight, into twenty-three of which the Scriptures are not known to have been before translated. Vide pages 11 & 37.

‡ Vide remarkable instance in David Levi's Dissertation on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 72; and from 97 to 122.

never recognise in a religion, thus savagely perverted, the system of mercy and peace which their promised Messiah was to establish. But as Christians shall approach to an agreement in every thing essential, and shall learn to preserve brotherly love, notwithstanding lesser differences, the genuine beauties of the Gospel of Peace will be distinctly seen, and the characters of its heavenly origin appear conspicuous, both to the Gentile and the Jew.

We may also be encouraged to hope, that the reception of genuine Christianity will be facilitated by the downfall of the Mahomedan superstition, which, as it originated in deception, was spread by violence, and is totally destitute of proof, appears gradually declining as knowledge and inquiry are diffused, and the despotism which upheld it is narrowed in its extent, and weakened in its authority; and it is notorious how long and heavily the Mahomedan yoke has pressed upon the Asiatic Jews, amongst whom are included many descendants of the Two Tribes of Judah, and probably the entire body of the Ten Tribes of Israel. Another great impediment to the conversion of the Jews, appears likely to be removed by the rapid decline of Popery, which, by exhibiting Christianity as an idolatrous adoration of an inferior Being, shocked the reason and wounded the feelings of the Jews, and thus closed their ears against the preachers of the Gospel, by an almost invincible prejudice; while, by the rigours of its persecution, it terrified them from extending their inquiries and discovering the truth.

The spirit of prophecy, both in the Old and New Testament, connects the conversion of the Jews with the most extended and glorious triumph of the Gospel; and the present state of the world exhibits a variety of circumstances which evidently prepare for this consummation. The Jews, dispersed through every region, habituated to every climate, familiar with the language and the manners of every country, holding a constant correspondence with each other, would form a company of preachers, who without a miracle would proclaim to every nation under heaven, in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God. * "Their sound would go out into all lands, their "voice to the ends of the world." If converted, like St. Paul,

* Acts ii. 11.

from inveterate enemies to zealous preachers, their testimony would carry conviction to every heart; and while they adored that Jesus whom they had crucified, as the Son of God, and proclaim that Gospel they had for eighteen hundred years rejected as the word of life, all mankind would exclaim, "This "is the finger of God." * Thus, as during their alienation they have been unobjectionable, because hostile, witnesses of the divine origin of those prophecies to which Christianity appeals, they would, when converted from hostility, be resistless preachers of those truths which they had rejected; thus verifying the declaration of the Apostle, that "if the casting them away was "the reconciling of the world, the receiving of them will be life "from the dead." †

The time of these events I would not presume precisely to ascertain; it will certainly be coincident with the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years, which are equivalent to the "time, times, and a half," of Daniel, when God shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people; ‡ the same period during which, according to St. John in the Apocalypse, the church of Christ was to remain desolate in the wilderness; § the forty-two months during which the court without the Temple is to be given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread under foot. ‖ At whatever era this period be considered as commencing, ¶ it is evidently now drawing to a close. The decline of Papacy and of Mahomedanism; the multiplication of missions, and translations of the Scriptures; the communication lately opened between the ancient and apostolic church of the Syrian Christians in Hindoostan ** and the

* Exod. viii. 19. † Rom. xi. 15. ‡ Dan. xii. 7.
§ Rev. xii. 14. ‖ Rev. xi. 2.

¶ Faber places its commencement at the year of our Lord 606; Dr. Hales, 620; Mr. Bicheno, 529; Fleming, 552; Bishop Newton, 727. Its close must be equally uncertain. Vide Dr. Hales's Chronology, page 1358, where seven different terminations of this period are recited.

** Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, article concerning the Syrian Christians.—When the Portuguese compelled 150 of the Syrian clergy on the coast to attend a synod, headed by a Romish archbishop in place of their own, who had been sent prisoner to Lisbon, they were accused, says Dr. Buchanan, of the following practices and opinions: "That they had married wives; that they owned but two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; that they neither invoked saints, nor worshipped images, nor believed in purgatory; and that they had no other orders or names of dignity in the church, than Bishop, Priest, and Deacon." These tenets they were

Church of England, tending so strongly to protect the former, and prove the purity of the latter; the spread of Christianity in Asia, Africa, America, in the Frozen and the Torrid Zone, under the Northern and the Southern Pole, as well as under the Equator; the changes in the situation of the Jews, and the new feelings of mankind towards this singular people;—all these circumstances indicate the approach of that distinguished era, when the conversion of the Jews shall prepare for the fulness of the Gentiles, and all shall become one fold under one Shepherd, even Jesus Christ the Lord.

To conclude: When we observe the nature and the unity of the grand design which pervades and connects the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and the manner in which they describe the progress and conduct of this design, it seems scarcely possible to doubt their divine original: The design is that of bringing all mankind to an exalted, pure, and spiritual happiness, by teaching, enforcing, and exciting in them love and obedience to the one true God. As this grand object is perfectly singular and unparalleled, no other system of religion so much as professing to attempt it (except such as have plainly borrowed it from the Scriptures, and at the same time debased it with the intermixture of human error and depravity) so the manner in which the Scriptures describe this scheme to have been conducted, is also such as no human invention can be supposed to have formed, no human contrivance could have effected. Indeed when we contemplate the Jewish and Christian dispensations united in one system, which extended its views backward to the Creation, and forward to the final catastrophe of the human race—When we perceive that it connects these grand events by ascribing both, with all the intermediate gradations which combine them, to the same great Author, even the SON OF GOD, * "by whom all "things were made;" who is the "only mediator between God "and man;" and who in the "fulness of time, forsaking that

called on to abjure, or to suffer suspension from all church benefices. It was als decreed, that all the Syrian books on ecclesiastical subjects that could be found, should be burned; "in order," said the Inquisitors, "that no "pretended apostolical monuments should remain." Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, 2d edit. p. 89.

* Vide John i. ver. 1 to 14: 1 Cor. xv. 16 to 28: Phil. ii. 5 to 11: Col. i. 13 to 23: 1 Tim. ii. 5: Dan. vii. 13 & 14: Rev. i. 5 to 8: xi. 15 to 19: xv. 3 to 5, and xix. & xx. Vide also Butler's Analogy, Part II. ch. iv. & v.

"glory which he had with the Father before the world was," took our nature upon him, that he might live to instruct, and die to redeem, mankind, and has ascended into heaven, there to make intercession for us; whence he will return again in power and in great glory to judge the world, and to "render to every "man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient conti- "nuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour, and immor- "tality; eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and "do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation, "and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man "that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but "glory, honour, and peace, to every man who worketh good, to "the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect "of persons with God."*—When we see that the Scriptures represent this Divine Being as the centre in whom all revelations meet, the great Agent on whom all human expectations depend—When we view the scheme carried on under this Supreme Lord and King, according to the Scriptures, with an uninterrupted progress from the creation to this hour, and still evidently progressive; exhibiting the Church of Christ, and the Jewish Nation which rejects that Christ, as rendered equally subservient to this grand design of Providence; by which "the "kingdoms of this world will finally become the kingdoms "of the Lord and of his Christ:" † and the triumph of grace here will prepare for the kingdom of glory hereafter.—When we contemplate all this, can we avoid exclaiming with the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge "of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways "past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the "Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first "given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to "whom be glory for ever. Amen." ‡

* Rom. ii. 6—11. † Rev. xi. 15. ‡ Rom. xi. 33—36.

SINCE the time when this last Lecture was composed, Providence, by a series of unexpected and illustrious events, has overturned that portentous Power which threatened universal slavery and ruin, and has restored freedom and peace to the European world. Surely this happy consummation, as it must revive the intercourse, and increase the union of the European States, and encourage a spirit of moderation and justice in public measures, by the illustrious example which the allied Powers exhibited in their hour of triumph—so it tends to inspire the religious observer with the cheering hope, that it will accelerate the removal of national and religious prejudices, the free communication of opinion, the diffusion of knowledge, and the final triumph of Truth. At the same time I confess that the restoration of the Inquisition in Spain, and the efforts of the Roman Pontiff to restore the Order of the Jesuits, and give new vigour to the monastic institutions of Popery, and also the difficulties which appear to impede the total abolition of the Slave Trade, throw a cloud over this otherwise bright prospect—they appear to indicate a slower advance in religious and moral improvement, and inspire a fear, that much labour, and perhaps much suffering, may intervene, before genuine Christianity can overcome the impediments which retard its spread and the corruptions which resist its influence. Of this only we may be sure, that the grand scheme for the advancement of human happiness, by the extension of the Gospel, is in progress, and that in the fulness of time "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover "the sea," and that thus "the kingdoms of this world shall become the "kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ."

APPENDIX.

SECTION I.

The texts which were collected by Le Clerc, as affording reason to doubt whether the Pentateuch was composed by Moses, considered; with the answer to the objection founded on each text annexed to it—Dr. Geddes's opinions on the authenticity of the Pentateuch considered—Specimens of his reasonings on this subject—An article in the Appendix to the eighth volume of the Critical Review for September, 1806, in which Mr. De Wett's work on the Old Testament is briefly considered—An humble remonstrance to the Reviewers.*

No. I.

TEXT: Gen. ii. 11 and 12.—"The name of the first river is "Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havi- "lath, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is "good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone."

OBJECTION.—These observations appear the production of some one residing in Chaldæa, for Pison is that branch of the Euphrates which falls into the Persian Gulf, and passes by those countries which were formerly called Chaldæa, and where now Ormus is; and it is not credible that Moses, who had but just left Egypt, should be so well acquainted with the geography and productions of distant countries, or have been inspired on such a subject.

ANSWER, by Le Clerc himself.—Admitting these observations to relate to Chaldæa, that country might be extremely well known in Egypt at the time of Moses, by merchants trading thither. For if in the time of Jacob, companies of merchants traded from Gilead (vide Genes. xxxvii. 25.) to Egypt, with spices, &c. why might not merchants from Chaldæa trade thither, near four hundred years after, in

* Vide Clerici Prolegomena in Vet. Testam. Dissertatio 3ia de Scriptore Pentatcuchi, et Witsii Miscellanea Sacra, Tom. I. Lib. I. cap. xiv. An Moses Auctor Pentateuchi.

the time of Moses? And thus might not all these circumstances be easily known, to one educated in the court of Pharaoh, and "*learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.*"

No. II.

TEXT: Gen. x. 8 to 12.—"And Cush begat Nimrod: he be-"gan to be a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is "said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech, "and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar. Out of that "land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Niniveth, and "the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, between Niniveth "and Calah: the same is a great city."

OBJECTION.—First, this exactness in describing the cities of Mesopotamia and Assyria, appears to indicate an author conversant in those countries; and it would be more natural after the Babylonish captivity, than at a period long before the Jews had any intercourse with the Babylonians. Secondly, Ninive took its name from Ninus, the son of Belus, who lived in the time of Deborah, two hundred years after Moses.

ANSWER.—The celebrity of Babylon and the other cities, affords a natural reason why Moses should particularize them, as he has in several other cases alluded to ancient facts and ancient names; and there is no accuracy of knowledge in the enumeration, which may not naturally be ascribed to him. To the second *objection* it is *answered*, there is no proof which can be depended on, that Nimrod did not build Ninive as well as the other cities, or that it took its name from Ninus; and if it did, it would only prove that this single name was added to the words of Moses, by some later writer, to complete the enumeration of these ancient and distinguished cities. I would add, that our common translation, which reads, "*Out of that land went* "*Assur* (i. e. the Assyrian) *and built Niniveth*," &c. removes the whole difficulty. This clause may have been naturally added by some writer in the flourishing state of the Assyrian empire, before or during the Babylonish captivity. And this translation is not only agreeable to the original Hebrew, but to the Septuagint, the Samaritan, the Syriac, the Arabic and the Vulgate versions.

In truth, there being no other objection than this very feeble and futile one, made to the enumerations contained in this tenth chapter of Genesis, as inconsistent with the state of the world at the time Moses lived, forms as strong a presumptive proof as can be desired, that it was really written by him; and that he possessed the most astonishing accuracy of information as to the origin of nations, and the primeval history and spread of mankind. It is indeed most remarkable, that this chapter, short as it is, supplies the only clue which

directs our steps, in tracing the progress of nations in the very remotest period of antiquity; and that the authors who have followed it with the closest attention, have been most successful in evolving the labyrinths and penetrating the recesses of the very earliest history, and explaining in a rational and consistent manner the apparently wild and chimerical fictions of heathen mythology. Memorable examples of this are found in the *Phaleg* of *Bochart*, in which, from this account in Genesis, he traces with such wonderful accuracy and success the origin of nations; and thus decidedly confirms the Mosaic history, which declares that "of the three sons of Noah was the whole earth over-"spread." *

Equally remarkable is the success with which the learned Bryant, following the same guide, has analysed the various systems and fables of ancient mythology, and shewn how naturally they can be explained and connected, by considering them as ultimately derived from the facts and characters of the Mosaic records. I might easily multiply instances, but I forbear, and proceed with my subject.

No. III.

TEXT: Gen. xi. 28 and 31.—"Haran died in Ur of the Chal-"dees: they went from Ur of the Chaldees, to the land of "Canaan."

OBJECTION.—This city or country could not be so called in the time of Abraham, for the *Chasdem* or *Chaldæans* descended from *Chesed*, who was the nephew of Abraham by his brother Nahor, Gen. xxii. 22. In the time of Moses that region was called Padan Aram; it was the more modern writers about the time of the captivity, who called it the land of the Chaldees.

ANSWER, by Witsius.—Le Clerc, who advanced the objection, confesses it is altogether uncertain whether the Chaldæans derived their name from Chesed, and where this city was, since it was the name of two cities near the Euphrates; the extent of the land of Chaldæa is also uncertain. It is remarkable that Le Clerc, who on reflection abandoned and even refuted his own objections to the authenticity of the Pentateuch, has omitted to take any notice of this in his review of them; in all probability deeming it too trifling.

It is indeed not wonderful that Witsius should grow a little angry: after stating the answer, he adds, "Hæc si vera sunt ne species quidem "difficultatis superest, quid ergo movit criticum nisi prava carpendi "libido, ex qua orta est quam subjungit accusatio, *scriptores sacros* "*parum exactos esse nominibus.*" If Le Clerc advanced this accusation, it was certainly a rash act; but he should be forgiven, since he as certainly repented of it.

* Gen. ix. 19.

No. IV.

TEXT: Gen. xii. 6.—"The Canaanite was then in the land:" and xiii. 7. "The Canaanite and the Perizzite then dwelled in "the land."

OBJECTION.—They therefore were *not* there when this history was written, but they continued there until after the death of Moses; therefore he was not the author of this book.

ANSWER, by Witsius.—It does not follow from this clause, that the Canaanites had been expelled when it was written; it may mean no more, than that the Canaanites were *even at that time* in the land which God had promised to give to the seed of Abraham. And this observation may have been intended to illustrate the faith of Abraham, who did not hesitate to obey the command of God, by sojourning in this strange land, though even then inhabited by a powerful nation totally unconnected with, if not averse to him: a circumstance intimated by Abraham's remonstrance to Lot, to avoid any enmity between them, "because they were brethren;" as if he had said, It would be most extreme imprudence for us, who are brethren, who have no connexion or friendship but with each other, to allow any dissension to arise between us, surrounded as we are by strangers, indifferent to, or even averse to us, who might rejoice at our quarrel, and take advantage of it to our common mischief; "for the Canaanite and Perizzite was "even then in the land." What is there in this, asks Witsius, which Moses might not have said? I may venture to add that another reason may be given, for noticing the circumstance of the Canaanite and Perizzite having been then in the land, which Moses immediately after declares God had promised to the seed of Abraham. The Israelites might thus be most clearly satisfied, that no change had taken place in the purpose of God to give them this land, when they were reminded that at the very time this purpose had been declared, the very same nation possessed the country, who still occupied it. It may be necessary to remark, that Dr. Geddes insists that *it must be granted*, that "this comma supplies a proof, that this history was written after the "expulsion of the Canaanites, or that it must be considered as an ad-"dition by some posterior scribe;" which last he is not disposed to admit. He adduces Dathe and Rosenmuller as explaining the passage as Witsius had done: "the Canaanite was even then in the land." They are as respectable authorities in Hebrew literature as even Dr. Geddes himself; and I think the Doctor's opinion, that this comma was necessarily written after the expulsion of the Canaanites, already sufficiently refuted.

No. V.

TEXT: Gen. xiii. 18.—"Abram dwelt in the plain of Mamre, "which is in Hebron."

OBJECTION.—It appears from Joshua, xiv. 15, and xv. 13, that the original name of this place was Kirjath Arba, and that it probably took the name of Hebron from the grandson of Caleb.

ANSWER.—The words "which is in Hebron," seem to have been added by a later hand, to mark out the place, as evidently was done in Genesis, xxiii. 2. "And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is "Hebron, in the land of Canaan." Such explanatory additions becoming necessary by time, appear to me rather to confirm than impeach the antiquity of the original. Witsius thinks Hebron added as an explanatory word, wherever it occurs.

No. VI.

TEXT: Gen. xiv. 14.—"Abram pursued them unto Dan."

OBJECTION.—Dan acquired that name from the Danites, long after Moses, the ancient name of the city being Laish.

ANSWER.—Le Clerc from Josephus, Antiq. Lib. I. cap. x. observes, that this place was so called from its being near one of the fountains of the river JORDAN; JOR was the name of the other. Witsius seems to think this word was inserted by a later hand (Samuel or Ezra) as explanatory of the situation, in the room of an old name, the application of which was unknown. I would add, that the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Arabic version read, instead of DAN, BANJAS. There was therefore probably some uncertainty as to the name which had originally stood here; which would render the insertion of a modern name to mark the place plainly, more necessary.

No. VII.

TEXT: Gen. xx. 7.—"He is a prophet." נביא.

OBJECTION.—This word was of a more modern date than Moses, as appears from 1 Samuel, ix. 9.

ANSWER.—The word is certainly used in this sense constantly in the Pentateuch. Thus, Exod. vii. 1. God tells Moses, "thy brother "shall be thy *prophet*," thy נביא. Numb. xi. 29. "Would God "the Lord's people were all *prophets*," the same word is used; and Numb. xi. 27. "Eldad and Medad do *prophesy*," the same root is used; and Deut. xiii. 1. 3. 5. *prophet* is expressed by the same word; and in the promise of God to Moses, Deut. xviii. 18. "God will raise "them up a *prophet* like unto thee." Nor does the passage in Samuel prove the word was never used before, but rather that it was not used to denote strictly a *foreseer* of future events, which in Samuel's time it was appropriated to. "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to "enquire of God," (to reveal secrets or future events) "thus he spake, "Come and let us go to the seer, (הרואה) for he that is now called a "prophet (נביא) was beforetime called a seer." Now to me this change of signification appears natural, and easily to be accounted for. The early patriarchs, to whom this word was applied, and Aaron himself,

were much more distinguished as *intercessors* with God, *expounders* of his will, and *teachers* of true religion, than as foreseers of future events. At that period, or afterwards, two distinct words may have been used to denote these two ideas: in process of time, as the teachers sent from God became more distinguished for prophecy, the word originally applied to them *generally*, became more *confined* to the predictors of future events, and superseded the use of the second word, which had been more recently introduced, and was always of inferior dignity.

But be this as it may, the word is most frequently used to denote a prophet, in the other books of Scripture, and even in Samuel. Le Clerc on mature consideration, (and it should seem very rationally,) thought that instead of calling into question the authenticity of the entire Pentateuch, in consequence of this parenthesis, we should rather question the authority of the parenthesis in 1 Sam. ix. 9. which is entirely unconnected with the context, perplexes the sense, and seems evidently to have been a marginal note which crept into the text, and at a wrong place too. Vide Clerici Notas in 1 Sam. ix. 9.

No. VIII.

TEXT: Gen. xxii. 14.—"And Abraham called the name of "that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the "mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

OBJECTION.—Some persons affirm this to be the mountain Moriah, on which the temple was built; and that it did not get this name, מוריה, which, say they, is the same as that taken from this event, יראה, until the temple had been built. Besides, the phrase, "*as it is* "*said to this day*, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," does not seem adapted to the period when Moses lived.

ANSWER.—There is nothing but mere conjecture for the mount Moriah deriving its name from this event, and still less for its not being so called until after the temple was built. The name *Jireh*, though similar in sense to Morijeh or Moriah, is not the same, and may have been in use from the time of Abraham: and the interval between Abraham and Moses was long enough (above four hundred years) to justify the expression, *as it is said to this day*. Le Clerc brings many instances to confirm such a use of the words *to this day*, I think unnecessarily. In truth I do not clearly understand either the objection or the answer. If the reader is curious, he may find them in Clerici Dissertatio, No. vii. p. 32. Witsius takes no notice of this objection, nor do I think it was necessary to notice it; but I am unwilling to suppress any appearance of objection.

Dr. Geddes is of opinion that there is no necessity to say with Eben Ezra that there is here any interpolation; it may be a part of the original narrative, whether written by Moses or any other person; an expression may become proverbial, during the lifetime even of him who

first uttered it. All that we can lawfully infer from the text is, that these words, "in the mountain the Lord will provide," had become a proverbial saying when the author wrote.

No. IX.

TEXT: Gen. xxxv. 21.—"And Israel journeyed, and spread "his tent beyond the tower of Edar."

OBJECTION.—The writer of this could not be Moses, for Edar was the name of a tower over one of the gates of Jerusalem; beyond the present site of which, says the writer, Israel spread his tent.

ANSWER.—The tower of Edar means the *tower of the Flocks*, and there might have been different towers so called in the time of Jacob; and if the gate of Jerusalem stood in the spot meant by Moses, it may have gained its name from this old name, now revived and applied to a new object.

The learned Mr. Marsh observes, that this objection implies a manifest absurdity: "for if the writer of this passage had meant the tower "of Edar in Jerusalem, he would have made Jacob spread his tent be-"yond a tower, that probably did not exist till many hundred years "after his death." * But Dr. Geddes builds much upon this text; vide infra.

No. X.

TEXT: Gen. xxxvi. 31.—"And these are the kings that "reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king "over the children of Israel."

OBJECTION.—There are then reckoned up eight kings in succession, that is, as many as there were generations from Jacob to Obed, grandfather of David, and cotemporary with Saul the first king of Israel; whereas, from Jacob to Moses were only four generations, as Moses himself counts them.

Witsius ANSWERS—There was here nothing Moses might not have said, for in Gen. xxxv. 11. it was promised to Jacob that "kings "should come out of his loins;" and Moses might mark it as a singular fact, that so many kings had reigned over Esau before his own time, and consequently before this promise to Jacob had been fulfilled: and it appears from Deut. xvii. 14, Moses foretold the Jews would elect kings. As to the number of kings, 236 years elapsed from the death of Isaac, when Esau took possession of Edom, to the time when Moses became leader of the Jews, and this might well allow eight successions of kings. Le Clerc, however, from an idea that this passage, if retained, would imply a prophetic declaration of Moses, on a subject which did not require it, supposes that from verse 31 to 40, is *an interpolation* of a later hand; and I confess I think it carries

* Vide Marsh on the Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses, Cambridge, 1792, p. 14.

internal evidence of its being so; it is written in a different manner from the parts before and after it, being much more particular than the rest of the chapter, mentioning not only the king's names, but the names of the cities they built, and of the *wives of some*, and of memorable actions they performed; whereas, in verse 40, we find the enumeration of dukes or chiefs descended from Esau, resumed and carried on with the simplicity of the preceding part of the chapter; and ending with this expression, "these be the *dukes of Edom*, according to "their habitations in the land of their possession; he is Esau, the father "of the Edomites." Now this looks as if only *dukes* had been mentioned before, otherwise it would probably have been said, "these are "the *dukes and kings* of Edom," &c. Such an insertion might naturally enough have been made by Samuel, to complete the historical sketch of Edom in this chapter. But either way the general authenticity of the Pentateuch cannot be affected by it. After having formed the above opinion, I was much gratified at finding that it coincides with that of the learned Kennicott, who insists that these verses were evidently taken from 1 Chr. i. 43. 54. from whence having been inserted in the margin of some very ancient MS. here in Genesis, they were afterwards taken into the text. Vide Kennicott's Remarks on select Passages of the Old Testament, p. 35.

No. XI.

TEXT: Gen. xl. 15.—Joseph says, "For indeed I was taken "away out of the land of the Hebrews."

OBJECTION.—It could not be called *the land of the Hebrews*, until they had invaded and taken possession of it.

ANSWER.—Joseph might well call that particular part of the land of Canaan near Hebron, where Isaac and Jacob had resided for so many years, the land of the Hebrews. They, it is true, were not originally natives of the country, but they possessed such wealth, such numerous families, herds, and flocks, that they were looked up to as mighty princes. (Vide the language of the children of Heth to Abraham, Gen. xxiii. 6.) We find them joining the neighbouring kings in making war, (vide Gen. xiv.) making compacts and leagues even with kings, (vide Gen. xxi. 23. and xxvi. 14.) and even conquering entire cities (as Gen. xxxiv.) living according to their own customs, and exercising their own religion. It is therefore perfectly credible, the place of their residence may have been termed the land of the Hebrews, as they had been there for such a length of time, independent and in alliance with the natives, (vide Gen. xiv. 13.) These are the observations of the learned Altingius, adopted by Witsius, and confirmed by Le Clerc.

No. XII.

TEXT: Exod. vi. 26, 27.—At the end of the genealogy of the tribe of Levi is added, "These are that Aaron and Moses, *to*

"whom the Lord said, Bring the children of Israel from the "land of Egypt according to their armies. These are they "which spake to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring out the chil- "dren of Israel: these are that Moses and Aaron."

OBJECTION.—This could not have been written by Moses; he would not thus ostentatiously and unnecessarily particularize himself and his brother: it is the language of a person writing long after his death.

ANSWER.—It was neither ostentatious nor unnecessary to point out to future generations, that the *Aaron* from whom the *High Priests descended*, was the same employed by God to act such a distinguished part in the deliverance of his chosen people; and thus mentioning of Aaron, who acted but a secondary part, it would have been unnatural to omit Moses, who was the chief. And that this was the real reason of this particular notice, appears from the *sons of Aaron*, from whom the High Priests were to be taken, being *distinctly* enumerated, while *no notice* is *taken* of the *sons of Moses*, who were to remain in a private station undistinguished among the Levites. Had the learned critics noticed this last circumstance, they would probably have seen that this passage, instead of affording any reason to suspect that Moses did not write it, supplies a strong presumptive proof that he did; for any other writer would have been disposed to treat the great legislator of the Jews with more distinction than his brother. May I then be permitted to say, that this circumstance supplies another instance of the *coincidence* of the *narrative* with the *peculiar character and situation of the supposed author*, to be added to those enumerated Part I, Lect. III. and confirming the internal proofs there adduced, to establish the genuineness and truth of the Pentateuch.

It is scarcely necessary to notice here the futile and ignorant objection of *Paine*, that Moses speaks of himself in the *third person*; an objection which would disprove the genuineness of the works of Thucydides, Xenophon, and Cesar, as well as of Moses. In truth, this writer, whose ignorance can be only equalled by his temerity, his presumption, and his virulence, has been already so fully exposed and confuted, especially by the venerable Bishop WATSON, that I think it unnecessary to go out of my way particularly to notice his cavils. I may, however, I believe, venture to say, that such of them as relate to that part of Scripture which it is the object of this work to vindicate, have been considered and confuted in it.

No. XIII.

TEXT: Exod. xvi. 35.—"And the children of Israel did eat "manna forty years, until they came into a land inhabited: "they did eat manna, until they came into the borders of the "land of Canaan."—"Now an omer is the tenth part of an "ephah."

OBJECTION.—This could not have been written by Moses, as the Jews did not reach the borders of Canaan, or cease to eat manna till after his death; nor would Moses speak thus of an omer, the measure by which all the people gathered the manna, "an omer for every man." It is the language of one speaking when this measure was out of use, and an ephah more generally known.

ANSWER.—This is *plainly a passage inserted by a later hand;* it forms a complete parenthesis, entirely unconnected with the narrative, which having given a full account of the miraculous provision of manna, closes it with the order to Aaron, "to lay up an omer full of manna "in the ark, as a memorial to be kept for their generations." This was evidently the last circumstance relating to this matter, which it was necessary for Moses to mention; and he accordingly then resumes the regular account of the journeyings of the people. Some later writer was very naturally led to insert the additional circumstance, of the time during which this miraculous provision was continued, and probably * added an explanatory note, to ascertain the capacity of an omer, which was the quantity of food provided for each individual by God; to ascertain it therefore must have been a matter of curiosity. Possibly the manna laid up in the ark might have been lost when it was taken by the Philistines, and this note added by Samuel.

Here again I contend, that the insertion of such notes rather confirms than impeaches the antiquity and genuineness of the original narrative. If this were a compilation long subsequent to the events it records, such additions would not have been plainly distinguishable, as they now are, from the main substance of the original; since the entire history would have been composed with the same ideas and views as these additions were; and such explanatory insertions would not have been made, if length of time had not rendered them necessary.

No. XIV.

TEXT: Deut. i. 1.—"These be the words which Moses "spake unto all Israel *beyond* Jordan in the Wilderness, in "the plain over against the Red Sea, between Paran and To-"phel, and Laban, and Hazeroth and Dizahab."

OBJECTION.—No objection at all to our translation *(on this side Jordan,)* with which the Syriac agrees, and the Targum of Onkelos retaining the same word as in the original Hebrew, leaves it undeter-

* I say only probably, because the words, "*an omer is the tenth part of an ephah*," might very naturally be used by Moses, who might mark the relation between an omer and an ephah, to transmit it to posterity. Thus, Numbers, iii. 46. in the account of the redemption-money of the first-born, "over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites," Moses says, "Thou shalt take five she-"kels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them. The shekel is "twenty gerahs." Now that this passage was written by Moses, I have endeavoured to prove from its very nature, Vide supra. In truth, in a history descending to such minuteness as the Mosaic history does, such notices as these are perfectly natural; and such particularity is the strongest proof of genuineness and truth. Vide supra, Part I. Lect. II. III. and IV.

mined whether it should be *on this side* or *beyond* Jordan. The objection then lies against the *Vulgate* and the *Septuagint*, which translate *beyond* Jordan, a situation which supposes the writer in Palestine, where Moses never was.

ANSWER.—The objection is founded on a mistranslation: the original word בעבר is completely ambiguous, signifying sometimes *beyond*, sometimes *on this side*, or more properly *at* or *on the passage* of Jordan; thus in Joshua, xii. 1. the words translated *on the other side* Jordan towards the rising of the east, and ver. 7. *on this side* Jordan on the west, are both expressed by the same Hebrew word. For more, vide Le Clerc in locum: Witsius's Dissertatio, No. 46. p. 129; Huetius Demonstratio Evangelica, Prop. 4. cap. xiv; and Bibliotheca Biblica in locum, notwithstanding Dr. Geddes's difference of opinion.

No. XV.

TEXT: Deut. iii. 11.—"Only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants: behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron: is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

OBJECTION.—It is not natural Moses should speak thus of a man lately slain, and all the circumstances about whom must have been so well known to the Israelites; and it was more likely his bedstead should be at Basan, his own capital, than in any city of the children of Ammon.

ANSWER.—Le Clerc, who made the objection, observes, Moses might wish to refer posterity to this bedstead as a lasting monument of the extraordinary stature of Og; and we know from Deut. ii. 21. that the Ammonites had expelled a race of gigantic stature from their country; and possibly this very Og had been one of them, and his bedstead may have been preserved as a trophy of victory at Rabbah, for a considerable time before Moses wrote.—This answer of Le Clerc's seems sufficient; yet I acknowledge this verse and the 9th, "*which* "*Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Shenir*," appear to me explanatory additions by a later hand; as also ver. 14, *(Vide infra.)* Perhaps the situation of this territory beyond Jordan, and its remoteness from the land of *Judea Proper*, might have made some subsequent writer more anxious to illustrate this part of the history by short marginal notes, and confirm it by reference to known monuments and names. This opinion I formed before I had read Dr. Geddes's strong assertion, "that he who could believe this verse was "written by Moses, is ripe for believing any thing." I do not believe it was written by Moses, and yet I do most firmly believe Moses was the author of the Pentateuch.—N. B. Dr. Geddes with some probability interprets this word, a coffin, not a bedstead, and conjectures

that Og, after the battle in which he was subdued, when he found himself unable to defend his own capital, had fled to Rabbath, where he may have died and been buried in this coffin.

No. XVI.

TEXT: Deut. iii. 14.—"Jair the son of Manasseh took all "the country of Argob, unto the coasts of Geshuri, and Maac-"hathi; and called them after his own name Bashan-havoth-"jair unto this day."

OBJECTION.—"*Unto this day*," could not have been written by Moses, as the event happened only a few months before his death.

ANSWER.—This is undoubtedly the *insertion of some later writer* willing to connect this memorandum of ancient history with the part of the Mosaic record to which it properly belonged. And though the critics have not noticed it, yet it seems to me evident, that the very substance and structure of this verse mark it as an interpolation. In the two verses before, and the two verses after, Moses mentions the distribution he had made of the lands taken on that side Jordan, to the two and a half tribes, with this remarkable phrase *annexed* to each "*I gave them*." Thus the 13th verse is, "And the rest of Gilead, "and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe "of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was "called the land of giants." The verse now in question *repeats* this fact in a form *different* from that used immediately before, *interrupting* the narrative by telling us, that *Jair* the son of Manasseh *took all the country of Argob*, &c.; and *then* the legislator *proceeds* again in the first person, in perfect connexion with the 13th verse, but very abruptly as following the 14th, "And I *gave* Gilead unto Machir." In a word, we must include the 14th verse in a parenthesis, to preserve the train of thought and style unbroken: its introduction is forced and unnecessary.

No. XVII.

TEXT:—The entire Thirty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, which *gives an account of the death of Moses.*

ANSWER.—The words of Moses evidently conclude with the thirty-third chapter, which contains the blessings pronounced by him on the whole people collectively, and the several tribes distinctly, before he went up the command of God to Mount Nebo, to view the land of Canaan and to die there. The thirty-fourth chapter was added to complete the history, the first eight verses probably immediately after his death by his successor Joshua, the last four by some later writer, probably Ezra.

We have now collected all the passages which the ingenuity and diligence of Le Clerc, a most acute critic, could discover in the Pentateuch, calculated to raise a doubt whether it was not composed by some writer later than Moses, which on a hasty view of the subject, he maintained was the fact; and adopted the wild hypothesis, that the Pentateuch was compiled by the priest, sent from Assyria to teach the colonists settled by Nebuchadnezzar in Samaria, the manner of worshipping the God of the land. On maturer consideration, he distinctly saw and candidly acknowledged, that these passages did not bear him out in this opinion; which he accordingly publicly retracted, and distinctly reconsidered all the Texts he had alleged in its support, and refuted the arguments against the genuineness of the Pentateuch, which he had derived from them. Witsius, who answered his original objections, and says of him, "In iis conquirendis omnium ni fallor di-"ligentiam superavit doctissimus Clericus," concludes his answer with observing, that "if all these texts are considered without prejudice, "only four passages of the entire volume can be found, in which an "interpolation must be recognized; and this an interpolation so slight, "as only to extend to the change of *some one word*, or the addition of "some *one historical memorandum* (in additione brevissimæ historiolæ) "to which the words of the original gave a natural occasion."—"And "surely (concludes Witsius) these minute additions do not bear out the "enormous assumption of pronouncing, that Moses was not the au-"thor of the Pentateuch, in opposition to the credit due to the suf-"frage of all antiquity, as well as the authority of Christ and the "Apostles."

Le Clerc was very naturally disposed to give his own objections as great a degree of importance as they would bear, and his conclusion is as follows: "Hence we may collect, that of eighteen passages, which "are adduced as indications of a more modern date in the Pentateuch, "the greater number are doubtful; and it cannot therefore be urged, "that there are *every where* through *the Books of Moses* marks of a "different age. Some are plainly added by another hand, and yet they "are not such as to prevent us from acknowledging these books to be "the work of Moses; just as no one would deny that the Iliad and "Odyssey were the works of Homer, because, as the old grammarians "allege, there are various verses interpolated in different parts of "these poems. We are not to imagine that in the most ancient times, "there was as great a variety of books or as many copies of the same "book as at present; therefore it might easily come to pass, that any "thing added to the writings of Moses by any later prophet, might "afterwards appear in all copies of a subsequent date."

Le Clerc adds, "If indeed it was not from other considerations "evident, that far the greatest part of the Pentateuch must have been "written by Moses himself, as we have before shewn, there would, I "confess, arise from these marks of a more modern hand, most strong "reasons for believing that the entire work was written at a later pe-

" riod. But as we have certainly proved, that we must acknowledge " almost the entire Pentateuch to have been written by Moses, there " is no cause why we should not attribute these books to him."

These arguments of the learned Critic I have endeavoured to combine with such others, as appeared to me most important, in the First Part of the preceding Work, Lect. I. and II.; and I hope I may add, that I have traced another series of proofs from the internal structure of the history, in Lect. III. and IV. which preceding writers had not adverted to, and which, combined with those before adduced, form a mass of *direct* proofs that the entire Pentateuch was the work of Moses himself; against which the presumptions and *suspicions* grounded on the Texts we have been now considering, are of so little weight as to be incapable of raising any serious doubt in any candid or reflecting mind.

Dr. Geddes's opinions on the Authenticity of the Pentateuch, considered:—Specimens of his reasonings on this subject.

THE minuteness of this discussion will, I trust, be excused, when it is recollected, that the genuineness of the Pentateuch is still doubted or denied, by Writers who claim the character of learned critics, and even of profound divines. Amongst these, the LATE Reverend Dr. GEDDES must not be passed by. As a theologian, commentator on, and translator of the Scriptures, he certainly has reached the very *acme of liberality*, even in this liberal age. The general tenor of his opinions is indeed very clearly summed up, where he tells us that " On the whole I think it may be laid down as an axiom, that the bulk " of Christians, whether Protestants or Papists, cannot be said to have " a rational faith, because their motives of credibility are not rational " motives, but the positive assertions of an assumed authority, which " they have never discussed or durst not question; their religion is the " fruit of unenlightened credulity. A very *small number** *of curious* " *and learned men only* have thoroughly examined the motives of their " religious belief, in any communion; and *it will be found, I presume,* " *that the* MORE CURIOUS *and* LEARNED *they were, the* LESS *they* " GENERALLY BELIEVED: hence, perhaps, the old adage, *Ignorance* " *is the mother of devotion.*" A writer holding *this principle* as an AXIOM, and ranking himself if not with the learned, yet certainly with the curious, we may expect would be careful *not to believe too much.* He tells us indeed, (and I will not presume to question his veracity, to his own master he must stand or fall) " I willingly pro- " fess myself a sincere though unworthy disciple of Christ; the Gospel " of Jesus is my religious code, and his doctrines my dearest delight: " Christian is my name, and Catholic my surname. Rather than re- " nounce these glorious titles, I would shed my blood. Catholic

* Vide Preface to Critical Remarks, p. 5 and 6.

"Christianity I revere wherever I find it," &c. &c. But as he has no where condescended to tell us, in what Catholic Christianity consists, "that Christianity which is a rational, a most rational religion;" I can only enter this solemn protest against any rash infidel, who may claim Dr. Geddes's authority as supporting infidelity, from his supporting particular opinions, which with minds differently constituted would lead to it. His conclusion we see is different, though his premises are unhappily too often the same with those of the infidel. I am compelled to notice some of them connected with the subject of this Work.

The Pentateuch this learned Critic admires and applauds, declaring that "whether it be considered as a body of history, or as a system of "jurisprudence, it will not appear to shrink from a comparison with "any piece of ancient writing, even when divested of every privilege "it might claim from revelation." To prove this more clearly, the Doctor in the process of his inquiries strips it of all such privileges. With him, *Moses was no more inspired than Teutas, Numa, or Lycurgus;** and the query, whether Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, appears to him "never to have been sufficiently answered, un- "less injurious language may be deemed an answer." And he declares that from *intrinsic* evidence it appears to him indubitable, "first, that "the Pentateuch in its *present form* was not written by Moses; se- "condly, it was written in the land of Canaan, and most probably at "Jerusalem; thirdly, it could not be written before the reign of David, "nor after that of Hezekiah." Here he was impatient to enlighten mankind by communicating the *result* of his inquiries, though he had not leisure to communicate the *proofs* on which that result depends. He had reserved those for his *general preface*, which he had not time to write in fourteen years (for his Prospectus was published in 1786, his Critical Remarks in 1800;) and unhappily death has closed his labours, before he was able to favour the world with this long promised Preface; we are therefore compelled to glean his reasons as they are scattered in his volumes.

I think it however necessary to remark his concession, that though he is inclined to believe the Pentateuch was reduced to its present form in the reign of Solomon, yet he is persuaded, "it was compiled "from ancient documents, some coeval with and some even anterior "to Moses." And he further observes, "*From the time of Moses "there can be no doubt, I think, of the Jews having written records.* "Moses, who had been taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, most "probably was the first Hebrew writer, or the first who applied "writing to historical compositions. *From his journals a great part "of the Pentateuch seems to have been compiled.* Whether he were "also the original author of the Hebrew cosmogony, and of the his- "tory prior to his own days, I would neither confidently assert nor "positively deny."

On the integrity of the present text of the Pentateuch, he observes,

* Vide his Verses in answer to a Friend, who asked him, Whether he thought Moses inspired?—End of the Critical Remarks.

that "though it has not come down to us without alterations, yet what "work of antiquity is there, the text of which we have so many "means of correcting as that of the Pentateuch? Two rival peoples, "the Jews and Samaritans, have preserved separate exemplars of it in "different characters; it was excellently translated into Greek, at a "period when the copies must have been much less imperfect than "they afterwards became; and we have various versions of very early "date, by the help of which, compared with the original and with "one another, and of the various readings of the text itself, collected "in the present century from a great number of manuscripts, a nearly "genuine copy of the Pentateuch may, by the rules of a judicious "criticism, be at length obtained."

In this entire account there is certainly some obscurity and confusion. What is meant by the Pentateuch *in its present form?* Does it mean this work with every word or verse which now is found in it, *e. g.* with the last chapter of Deuteronomy; or the text, as to the kings of Edom, marked above, No. X.? In this sense it might be admitted, that the Pentateuch in its *present form*, i. e. *so far as relates to these few passages*, plainly inserted by some later writer long after Moses, to explain or complete the history, was not entirely written by Moses, nor completed perhaps until the time of Ezra. But if, as the Doctor admits, there can be no doubt that the Jews had written records from the time of Moses; if the Pentateuch was compiled from *the very journals of Moses himself;* then it becomes the province of sound criticism to decide, how much of it is thus formed of the journals of Moses. I think I have proved from clear internal evidence, it was *entirely composed* of these identical journals, that is, entirely written by Moses himself, except only the *few passages* above referred to.

The learned Doctor has no where clearly detailed his opinions on this point in their full extent, by distinguishing the passages he considered as the genuine production of Moses, from those which he attributes to the supposed modern compiler. He has, however, given us some specimens of his mode of reasoning on this subject, which I proceed to consider.

Gen. x. 19.—Dr. Geddes in this verse adopts the Samaritan reading, which describes the bounds of Canaan as more extensive than the Hebrew text, viz. "from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates "and to the HINDER sea," (an expression elegant perhaps, but to me not very clear.) And he observes, "I prefer the Samaritan reading to the "Hebrew, for the following reasons: in the promise made to Abraham, "chap. xv. ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, the very same boundaries are assigned "to the land of Canaan in all the copies, which are here marked in "the Samaritan, and the same number of peoples or tribes included in "them. Again, in Exod. xxiii. 32, the same boundaries are assigned "in a more particular manner from the Red Sea to the Sea of the "Philistines (that is, the Mediterranean) and from the Wilderness of "Shur to the great river Euphrates. It is true this was not accom-"plished until the reigns of David and Solomon, which latter is ex-

" precisely said in the first Book of Kings, iv. 21. to have had dominion " over all the kingdoms from the river Euphrates unto the land of the " Philistines, and unto the borders of Egypt. But whence (asks the " Doctor) sprung the present reduction of those boundaries in the " present text of Genesis? That I know not; but I *suspect* it arose " from this; that when the compiler or translator of the present copy " of the Hebrew text lived, the boundaries of Judea had been greatly " circumscribed, and he had *accommodated his text* to that circum- " scription. But why then left he the other two passages unaltered? " This indeed, *I cannot account for, nor am I obliged to account for* " *it:* but this I affirm, the *present Hebrew text* is *inconsistent with it-* " *self*, the Samaritan is consistent; let the reader choose whether of " the two he will abide by." Now I should have no hesitation in choosing the *consistent text;* but I really think it not very *candid* in the learned Doctor, to impute to his imaginary compiler of the present Hebrew Pentateuch exactly *knavery* enough to alter, so as to *accommodate* to the existing bounds of the land of Judea, a *text* where no allusion to these bounds occurs, and *dulness* enough to leave *unaltered* passages which prophetically and directly pointed out these bounds, in a manner *contrary* to what Dr. Geddes supposes to have been their extent in the compiler's time. Let us, however, consider on what grounds this charge of inconsistency against the Hebrew text, *as it now stands*, is founded.

Gen. xv. 18 to 21, relates, " In that same day the Lord made a co- " venant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, " from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates: " the Kenites, and the Kennezzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hit- " tites, and the Perrizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and " the Canaanites, and the Gergashites, and the Jebusites." Here God promises to the Jews a great extent of country, from the Nile to the Euphrates, inhabited by *ten* distinct nations or rather tribes, of whom *one* was distinguished by the name of CANAANITES, who therefore inhabited only a *part* * of this extended country. Now Genesis, x. 15—19, states that " Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth, and " the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Gergashite, and the Hivite, " and the Arkite, and the Senite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, " and the Hamathite; and afterwards were the families of the Ca- " naanites spread abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from " Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar unto Gaza; as thou goest unto So- " dom and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha." This country is certainly only a *part* of that included in the subsequent promise to Abraham. But is it not obvious that there are two

* The learned Bochart, *Phaleg*, Lib. IV. cap. xxxvi. remarks that " the Canaanites were those " who inhabited partly on the sea and partly on the banks of Jordan; deriving their name either from " their being merchants, which the word in Hebrew imports, or because they held the chief place " for some time amongst the descendants of Canaan." Vide p. 348. Bochart remarks that " of the " eleven families of the Canaanites enumerated, Gen. x. 15, six were not involved in the anathema or " condemnation which the Jews were authorized to execute, the Sidonii, Arkæi, Sinæi, Avadii, " Samarai, Hamathæi; a new proof, if any were wanting, that it was *their own national guilt*, not " merely their descent from a guilty ancestor, which drew down on the condemned nations the " judgments of God."

natural and credible hypotheses, on which this apparent difference can be reconciled; one, that of the numerous descendants of Canaan *some one* tribe were particularly distinguished by the name of *Canaanites*: and that when the text says, "*and afterwards were the families of the Canaanites enlarged*," it means to mark out the peculiar extension of *this tribe*, and describes in the 19th verse the borders of *their territory*. This is not an imaginary hypothesis, because it appears from Gen. xv. 21. and Exod. xxiii. 28, that in the time of Abram and also of Moses, *one peculiar tribe* or nation descended from Canaan were called *Canaanites*, while others also descended from him had other names. Admitting this, is there any inconsistency between the passage which states, Gen. x. 19, that this *single* tribe occupied a *small* country, and Gen. xv. 18 to 21, which states, that *this tribe, united with nine others*, occupied a *much larger* space? But if this solution be not admitted, and it be maintained that Gen. x. 19, describes the *entire* country occupied by *all* the descendants of Canaan; is there yet any inconsistency in supposing that this is only the country occupied by them *soon after their first division* into distinct tribes, or as the text expresses, "after the families spread abroad;" but that in three hundred years after, when the promise was made to Abraham, the *same* nations occupied a much *greater extent of country*, and four hundred years after Abraham, in the time of Moses, a still greater? which is then (as Dr. Geddes observes) more particularly marked out, for this plain reason, that then it became more necessary to point out its precise bounds, that the Jews might know how much they were authorised to take possession of. Such then is the foundation on which this *critic* charges the *sacred text* with *inconsistency*, and its *compiler with fraud*. I feel no inclination to give any man *injurious language*; but the friends of this learned Doctor must excuse me, if I do not in this instance give him credit for that caution, judgment and candour, which such a discussion requires; and if, taught by this single example, I feel indisposed to adopt his conclusions, where he has not stated the reasons by which they are maintained.

But Doctor Geddes insists strongly on the text, Gen. xxxv. 21. "Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar." (Vide the texts considered before No. IX.) He founds his objection not so much on the *identity* of this tower with that over the gate of Jerusalem, as on the use of the word *beyond*. He observes, "whether "this tower were not far from Bethlehem, or near to the sheep-gate "of Jerusalem, if Moses had written this, he would not, he could "not have expressed himself in this manner; in describing a journey "from Bethel to Jerusalem, he could not with propriety say of any "intermediate place, that Jacob had come *beyond* it, when such an "event happened; whether he be supposed to have written his history "in Egypt or in his way to Canaan." As this objection did not occur to any preceding writer, let us consider it. The expression translated *beyond* is מִמִּגְדַּל, compounded of the word מִגְדָּל, which by itself signifies *trans, ultra, beyond, further on*, or as Leigh (vide his Critica

Sacra) expresses it, "*loci et temporis distantiam et remotionem significat*," and the præfix ב, which signifies *a, ab, from*. The compound is translated by Montanus, *ab ultra, from, beyond*, i. e. *he stretched his tent from beyond* the tower of Edar, or from a *distance beyond the tower of* Edar *to* that tower, marking an approximation to the place of the writer, as a person journeying from Bethel to Jerusalem or Bethlehem, must have approximated to a writer coming from Egypt towards the land of Canaan. Compare Gen. xix. 9, where the words עשרזלאזר are employed to signify removal to a greater distance; *accede ultra*, says Montanus; *stand back*, says our translation; the præfix מ, marks a removal in the contrary direction. Now if this remark be just, what becomes of Dr. Geddes's criticism? I do not question his skill in the Hebrew; but I do discover a most unwarrantable negligence and temerity, combined with a most eager zeal to overturn the genuineness of the Pentateuch. "But indeed (he concludes) *every* "*thing* convinces me that the Pentateuch was composed at Jerusalem, "or at least in Palestine." Yes, truly, *every thing* convinces him of it, even what *ought* to have convinced him of the *contrary*.

But as I am compelled to expose what appear to me Dr. Geddes' errors on this important subject, so I feel much more gratified at acknowledging his fairness where he has reasoned fairly. On Gen. xxxvi. 31, considered above (vide No. X.) Dr. Geddes remarks, "this and the "twelve following verses were by Spinoza urged, as one clear proof "that the Pentateuch could not be written by Moses; if he had only "said that *this part* of the Pentateuch could not have been written "by Moses, he would have said no more than what any discerning "reader must in my conception acknowledge. Nothing to me can "be plainer than that all this was written after there were kings, or "at least a king, in Israel." True. And are we then to understand Dr. Geddes's strong assertions, that "the Pentateuch in its *present form* was "not written by Moses," &c. &c. to mean *only this*, that though the substance of it consists of the journals of Moses, yet there *were parts of it added* in Palestine, even after the reign of Solomon? This assuredly is all he can prove: how is it to be lamented that he was not cautious or candid enough to say no more. Then his criticism might have exerted itself freely, to distinguish the genuine text from the interpolations; and the more accurately he distinguished them, the greater thanks would he have received from the friends of religion and of truth, who are now compelled to regard him as an enemy, and view all his proceedings with suspicion and distrust.

An Article in the Appendix to the Eighth Volume of the Critical Review for September, 1806, in which Mr. De Wette's Work on the Old Testament is briefly considered. An humble remonstrance to the Reviewers.

In the Appendix to the eighth volume of the Critical Review, September, 1806, I find a work noticed on the Old Testament, by a Mr. De Wette, teacher of philosophy at Jena; which, as it appears to maintain opinions very inconsistent with what seems to me the truth, and very injurious to the authority of the Pentateuch, I was anxious particularly to examine. I have not, however, been able to procure as yet either this work, or Vater's Commentary on the Pentateuch, which is represented as maintaining nearly the same opinions. And I think it is unfair and uncandid to combat an author, whose system is known only through the medium of a Review, in which it must necessarily be stated indistinctly and imperfectly, and possibly may be misunderstood and misinterpreted. I shall therefore advert to the article in which this work is noticed, only so far as relates to some positions immediately connected with my subject, and which are *distinctly* stated as supported by Mr. De Wette, The first is, that the book of Deuteronomy appears to have been the work of a very different writer from him or them, who wrote the second, third and fourth books ascribed to Moses. It is said, "this constitutes a whole, and breathes a spirit which in a "very remarkable manner distinguishes it from the other books." And we are afterwards told of "a *bold* dissertation of De Wette, in which "the book of Deuteronomy is *proved* to be different from the preced-"ing books of the Pentateuch, and the work of a later writer, by the "deviations in the phraseology of Deuteronomy from that of the pre-"ceding books." On this point Mr. De Wette and I are *fairly at issue*. That the book of Deuteronomy constitutes a whole, and that it is composed in a different manner, and with a different view from the three preceding books, I have stated. The three preceding books are *narratives* and *journals* formed at the time the events took place, or laws and regulations, recorded as they were gradually and occasionally promulgated, either by the public and miraculous voice from the glory of God, or through the medium of the inspired legislator; while the book of Deuteronomy is a *recapitulation* of those events delivered near *forty years after* the principal facts had taken place, in a public address to the Jewish nation, designed to impress the Divine authority of the Mosaic law on their minds, and to inculcate the necessity of perpetual obedience to the divine commands. But while this difference of object must have produced a difference of style and manner, I have endeavoured to prove that the Book of Deuteronomy, and the three preceding, must have been equally the production of Moses himself,

not from phraseology * alone, (for as to the variations in the phraseology of a language spoken above 3,300 years ago, by a nation of whose compositions so few have reached us, I conceive they cannot be clearly ascertained so as to form any very clearly conclusive ground of argument,) but from *the internal structure of the works*; from the nature of the facts they dwell on, the circumstances they select, the feelings they display; in a word, from the *difference* as well as the *coincidences* observable between them, which appear to me to be exactly such as nature and truth must have produced, had all these works really been written by the Jewish lawgiver himself; and which exhibit a harmony so exact, so natural, and evidently *undesigned*, that it cannot be accounted for on any other hypothesis. It affords me some gratification to find that this topic of argument appears to repel by anticipation the objections of Mons. De Wette on this part of the subject, and in this instance vindicate the authority of Scripture: I refer my readers to the preceding work, Part I. Lect. III. and IV.

Another assertion imputed to this author, relates to the tribe of Levi:—"Moses (says he) may have introduced a priesthood; "but who can define what portion of the laws relating to it was his "production? If the tribe of Levi had been distinguished in the "times of Moses in the sense and in the manner in which it is repre-"sented in the Pentateuch, and had been sanctioned as a cast of "priests, a hierarchy would have directed every thing; which history "does not shew."

To this I *answer*, that the constitution of the tribe of Levi must to a certainty have been fixed *before*, or *at* the original settlement of the Jews in Canaan, because we cannot otherwise account for one tribe being *excluded* from the possession of landed property, living, not in *one body*, as each of the remaining tribes did, but in cities dispersed through the entire land of Canaan, even on both sides of the river Jordan, and possessing amongst these cities all those which were appropriated as cities of refuge to fugitives in consequence of homicide. We cannot, I affirm, account for this, but on the supposition that the tribe of Levi had been set apart *before* the *settlement of the Jews in Canaan*, to be supported by *tithes* and *offerings* instead of land, and that they had *consented* to the arrangement. Here then is a full proof that the entire system concerning the tribe of Levi, their distribution, the tithes and offerings by which they were to be maintained, must have been promulgated and admitted before the settlement of the Jews in Canaan; it follows therefore that *every* part of the law of Moses respecting *these points*, was coeval with Moses himself. Can we, then, doubt whether it was written and published by Moses? What inferior

* I would not be understood to say that the phraseology of the Pentateuch affords no presumptive proof of its authenticity; much less do I in any degree admit that it supplies any presumption against its genuineness—but purely that this ground of argument is not so clear or convincing as that derived from the general structure of the history, and the prevailing sentiments and feelings pervading it, and the harmony and connexion of the various parts of the narrative. In proof that the phraseology of the Pentateuch supplies a strong presumption in favour of its genuineness, I beg leave to refer to the learned Mr. Marsh's tract on the Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses, pp. 5, 6, 7, and 13. I have briefly adduced his chief arguments in Part I, Lect. I.

authority would have been competent to establish so singular an arrangement, unfavourable to the temporal interests of the Levites, whom it excluded from landed property, and to those of the remaining tribes whom it loaded with the payment of tithes and offerings?

Observe now the inferences which clearly follow from this fact. If the arrangements concerning the distinction, the distribution, and the support of the tribe of Levi, were *coeval* with *Moses* himself, can we believe that the purposes for which they were so distinguished, distributed, and supported, were not *thought of until long after?* Can we believe that the Levites were set apart from the rest of the nation by Moses, and that no business was provided for them to attend to, until some ages after?—that, in short, the Levites existed from the beginning, but that the Levitical law was, as Mons. de Wette is represented to have stated it, "the invention and badge of later priests." This is incredible; we cannot but see that both are inseparable parts of one system, the entire of which must have been formed and established by the same authority, and at the same period; and as the arrangements as to the distinction, the distribution, and support of the Levites, must have been coeval with Moses, so must that Levitical law of ceremonials, sacrifices, and religious duties, for attending to which the Levites were set apart.

But Mr. De Wette asserts, the Levites could not have existed as a separate cast of priests, "otherwise a hierarchy would have been esta-"blished, which would have directed every thing; which the history "does not shew."—Assuredly this is a mistake; wonderful indeed would it have been, if the Levites, possessing no landed property, and no political rank, dispersed through the country, and dependent for their very existence on the degree of reverence and obedience paid to the Mosaic law, by a people prone to neglect and disobey it, though they never totally rejected it; wonderful it would have been, if such a hierarchy had "directed every thing." But the author was doubtless thinking of Rome, where at one period the Emperors were Pontiffs, and at another the Popes controlled Emperors. Indeed to some, the very sound of the word *hierarchy* carries with it the idea of boundless wealth, and resistless influence; but the Jewish Levite, often poor, dependent, and wandering, did not and could not possess any such wealth or influence.

Mr. De Wette is further represented as asserting, that "it is asto-"nishing and incredible in itself, that Moses should have published "ceremonial rites so accurately defined and so artificially contrived. "The feasts appear to have been the work of time and of successive "contrivances, rather than of a deliberate legal institution: amid the "deserts of Arabia, surrounded by dangers, inquietude and want, "Moses had no time to think of feasts."—What! in forty years, during which the people were miraculously sustained with manna, and during above thirty years of which the Jews never saw the face of an enemy, and were confined within a space they might have traversed in three months—was it impossible to contrive and write down regulations for observing three annual feasts, and conducting the daily worship and

offerings of the sanctuary? But, says this author (according to these reviewers) "Moses must have instituted the passover and the feast of "tabernacles in the midst of the events which occasioned them, and "even before the events, as would appear from Exod. xii. 3. but with "which verse 39 is at variance, for in verse 39 they appear to be taken "by surprise, while according to verse 3 they must have been prepared. "The whole relation *proves* itself *untrue* by its ambiguity and equivo- "cation." This is strong language, whether used by the German philosopher, or the English critic. Strange, that the inventor of this story could not avoid so clumsy an equivocation within twenty lines. But let us reconsider it: in Exodus, xii. 3. the people get notice to prepare the passover, "a lamb for each family," to be eaten with unleavened bread at a single meal, and "to be eaten *that night in haste;* it is the "Lord's passover." We are then told that at midnight all the first-born of the Egyptians were slain, "and there was a great cry through- "out all the land of Egypt; and Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron "by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my peo- "ple: and the Egyptians were urgent that they might send them out "of the land in haste, for they said, We be all dead men. And the "people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading- "troughs being bound in their clothes upon their shoulders." And now comes verse 39, which states, "and the people baked unleavened "cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt; and "could not tarry; neither had they prepared for themselves any victuals." Here, says our critic, is a direct contradiction; for they had notice to prepare the passover the very night before. True, but they had also been commanded to eat it as soon as it was prepared, and leave nothing of it until in the morning; this therefore did not *supply victuals* for their *journey*. "But they had notice of their departure, and ought to have "been prepared with victuals." The narrative does not say they had been told they should depart that night; Providence seems to have concealed this, that the sudden effect of the divine interposition should be more powerful and impressive. But if they had received twelve or twenty-four hours, or even four days, (the utmost possible length of notice the history will allow) notice of their departure, this was rather too short a time for 600,000 men, with a suitable proportion of women and children, and a mixed multitude besides, to *collect into one body*, and prepare for *quitting for ever* the place of their residence for 400 years, with flocks and herds, and much cattle. They might have been satisfied with carrying their bread away, without waiting to prepare it with all the nicety of confectioners. They had been commanded, in the beginning of the chapter, to eat the passover with *unleavened bread;* and in the end of it we are told, that they had no dough, *except unleavened*. And is this a contradiction? Or thus: a whole nation had received notice to quit their country for ever, within twenty-four hours, or even four days; and yet they are represented as going away in a hurry and unprepared—here is another contradiction; and thus the truth of a fact is overturned, which for 3,300 years has been believed and annually commemorated by a whole nation, from the very

period it took place, and the very *beginning of their year changed* to preserve a perpetual record of it. Really all this would be very ridiculous, if the subject did not so deeply concern the best interests of mankind, and exhibit the inventors of such arguments, and their retailers, somewhat in the character of the madman, who, as Solomon represents, "casteth firebrands, arrows, and death: so is the man who "deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" *

I will at present conclude my remarks on this article, by advising the admirers of such theological critics as Mr. De Wette, to read over Leslie's Short Method with the Deists, in the original work. The reasoning of this old Englishman is certainly not like that of the modern German school of Eichorn, Vaters, and De Wette. But I think these reasoners might read it with some improvement.

May I now be permitted, with all that humility which befits an author addressing the judges who are to decide his fate, *to say a word or two to the Critical Reviewers;* and that is, to entreat them not to appear quite so sure that every objection advanced against the truth of Scripture history, *even* of the Old Testament, is unanswerable, until the public, as well as themselves, have had an opportunity of considering it. They tell us indeed, that "in the remarks they have "given, they have *not* been declaring *their own* opinions, but those of "the author of the work, or of a German critic by whom it has been "highly commended;"—"they merely propose the subject for calm "investigation;"—"they only want to know of Revelation WHETHER "IT BE TRUE," (having, I presume, formed no clear decision as yet on that subject;) "and if it be true, it is of infinite moment, and every "thing good and fair and lovely must follow the firm, the rational and "unprejudiced conviction of the truth." They do, however, communicate to us *some* of *their own*, which I humbly hope they may reconsider: "Here are parts of the old Jewish fabric which appear to us," say they, "as they evidently did to Paul, to have nothing whatever to "do with the pure and polished structure of the Christian church; "they are a sort of clumsy and superfluous out-building, which as soon "as they are demolished will let more of the solidity and beauty of "the Christian edifice appear." Now I would seriously, and in per-

* Proverbs, xxvi. 18, 19.—Another species of argument which appears to be imputed to Mr. De Wette is, that if a practice prevailed among the Jews, such for instance as that of "offering on heights," and not going to the "sanctuary where God chose to place his name," the law against this practice which now stands in the Mosaic code *could not then have existed* there, and therefore so far that code is of modern origin. Now this is pretty much such an argument as if a Chinese one thousand years hence, reading of the frequent duels which are allowed in Christian countries, should infer that the command, "Thou shalt do no murder," did not then exist in the Decalogue, but that it was introduced in consequence of that practice. But I am not sure this mode of reasoning was used. I only note it by way of precaution: it may easily be paralleled in the ingenious reasonings of minute philosophers.

fect good faith, beg of these gentlemen to consider again, whether it is quite so certain that St. Paul thought thus of the connexion of Judaism with Christianity. He undoubtedly did teach that the ceremonial part of the Jewish Law was superseded by the Gospel; but assuredly he every where represents Judaism as the original foundation, the heaven-appointed introduction, the essential preparative for the Gospel of Christ. "To the Jews," he declares, "were committed the oracles "of God." * "The law" he pronounces "holy; and the command-"ment holy, and just, and good." † "To the Israelites" he declares, "pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving "of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are "the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who "is over all, God blessed for ever." ‡ But these critics dismiss the ceremonial part of the scheme, "as a *mere fugitive contrivance*, which, "if it were not the *work of human artifice*, it was at all events little "more than what human artifice might be expected to produce." St. Paul, on the contrary, thought that "Moses was admonished of God, "when he was about to make the tabernacle; for see, saith he, that "thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the "Mount." § These critics conceive the moral part of the law was entrusted to the *care of the prophets*; and they exemplify the *estimation* in which they hold what is generally deemed prophecy, by telling us "the prophets prepared for the coming of Christ, not, as is vulgarly "supposed, by the delivery of ambiguous oracles or equivocal predic-"tions, but by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of "the just; by proclaiming mercy to be better than sacrifice; and by "shewing the utter nullity of all ceremonial observances, without the "practice of humanity, of justice, and of truth." Now I humbly presume that it has been shewn || these principles were taught in the Mosaic law, though they were certainly inculcated with additional force by the prophets. But when these critics thus undervalue the Jewish Lawgiver and his institutions, I fear they forget the declarations of One, whose authority they still acknowledge—even the Son of God—who refers the Jews to Moses as bearing witness to himself; "Had ye "believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." ¶

Notwithstanding, however, the flippancy with which these critics have decided and declaimed against the Jewish Law, they seem to have felt that they had plunged a little beyond their depth, and talked contemptuously of a system which they did not understand; and I give them much credit for the candour with which they state their own *surprise* at this *discovery* of the inconsistency of many undeniable facts, with their crude and hasty decisions: "What strikes us with "wonder," say they, "in the history of the Jews, and what may well "impress general astonishment, is, that even in the rudest ages, when "the manners of the people were barbarous and uncivilized, and when "all the surrounding countries were immersed in the lowest depths of

* Rom. iii. 2. † Ibid. vii. 12. ‡ Rom. ix. 4, 5.
§ Heb. viii. 4, 5. || Vide supra, Part II. Lect. II. ¶ John v. 46.

"idolatrous superstitions, we do behold among the Jews, and for a "succession, not of years, but of centuries, a portion of intellect, "irradiated no doubt by the Supreme Intelligence, continually at work "to prove the being, and to preserve the awful consciousness of ONE "ONLY FIRST CAUSE: this seems to prove, that the Jews were to be "instrumental in promoting some beneficent plans of the moral Gover- "nor of the world, in a way which no other people were." This is certainly a candid admission of very important truth; and I again most seriously request these critics to consider, how utterly inconsistent this fact is with the hypothesis of Mr. De Wette, which they also appear to adopt, that the books ascribed to Moses, which contain that system of laws and institutions by which the Jews were rendered instrumental in preserving the knowledge of the ONLY TRUE GOD, "are tracts be- "tween which there is neither harmony nor connexion; that the narra- "tion of facts in these books proves itself (in many most important "points) untrue, by its ambiguity and equivocation. That there are "parts of the old Jewish fabric, which have nothing to do with Chris- "tianity, but are clumsy and superfluous out-buildings; that the cere- "monial part of the law is a fugitive contrivance, the work of human "artifice, or little more—the prophecies ambiguous oracles or equivo- "cal predictions," &c. &c. It were indeed most wonderful and astonishing if these were the means which Providence employed to preserve the knowledge of the ONE TRUE GOD, in the midst of an idolatrous world. Our critics will, I trust, reconsider these points, and hereafter adapt their opinions with somewhat more care to the truth of history, the analogy of nature, and the harmony of the divine dispensations. At all events the reasoning and serious part of their readers will learn what degree of credit they ought to attach to such opinions, and such criticism, on the most important subject that can occupy the human mind—the examination of the divine word, the discovery of the divine will, and the development of the divine dispensations; and I submit the admonition of the learned, candid, and pious Doddridge to the consideration of the Critical Reviewers; it occurs in his 143d Lecture, Sect. 18. "We may certainly infer, that for any one to pre- "tend to exalt the character of Christ and of Paul as divine teachers, "while at the same time they pour contempt upon the *Jewish institu-* "*tions* as a foolish and impious forgery, is a notorious contradiction "and absurdity; and common sense will teach us, that such authors, "whatever they may profess, do equally intend the subversion of the "Old Testament and the New."

SECTION II.

Remarks on some circumstances which have occasioned doubts as to the reality of some of the Mosaic miracles—General remarks on the improbability of objections which affect only some one miracle, not the entire series—Miracles in which the magicians appeared to imitate Moses; Mr. Farmer's opinion on this subject, and the arguments by which he supports it—The passage of the Red Sea attempted to be accounted for without a miracle, from a passage of Josephus—true import of this passage—supplies no evidence against the miracle—it is represented by Moses, and was believed by the Jews to be clearly miraculous—inference from thence—improbability of the Jews being able to escape by an extraordinary ebb of the sea—Dr. Geddes's observations on this subject—The pillar of cloud and fire which accompanied the Israelites—attempted to be accounted for without a miracle—account entirely inconsistent with the circumstances of the history, and with probability—Objection, from Moses's application to Hobab—inconclusive—Miraculous preservation of the raiment of the Jews in the wilderness—objected to—why necessary—Review of the mode in which Dr. Geddes accounts for the whole series of Mosaic miracles, without admitting any supernatural interposition—his account unphilosophic and incredible.

In the preceding Work, Part I. Lect VI. I have adduced such arguments as appear to me to prove satisfactorily, that the whole series of the Mosaic miracles is established by the clearest evidence; and if these arguments are conclusive, it may seem unnecessary to enter into any refutation of such objections as are raised, not against the *reality* of the *entire series* of miraculous interpositions, or the *general* truth of the history of the Mosaic miracles, but against some minute circumstances of them, some individual instances of supernatural interference; for, admitting any miraculous power to have clearly manifested itself on the occasion, and for the purposes recorded by Moses, the exercise of that power on the particular instances alluded to, becomes perfectly credible. In this case, the remark which Bishop Butler makes as to our Saviour, is strictly applicable to Moses. "Supposing it," says he, "acknowledged, that our Saviour, (or that the Jewish lawgiver) spent "some years in a course of working miracles: there is no more pre-"sumption, worth mentioning, against his having exerted this miracu-"lous power, in a certain degree greater, than in a certain degree less; "in one or two more instances, than in one or two fewer; in this, than "in another manner."* Nay, I may add, that the supposition of some particular facts, recorded as miraculous, being frauds and deluions, becomes improbable, in proportion as it is improbable either

* Analogy, Part II. Ch. II. p. 242.

that *fraud* should be practised to effect *some* parts of a system, by a messenger empowered to establish the *remaining* parts of it by miracles; or that delusion and error should be permitted to blend with and debase (even at its first introduction) a scheme evidently supported by a divine interference.

These considerations might, I conceive, justify me in omitting to notice the objections and doubts raised as to some particulars of the Mosaic miracles; but as this might seem to cut the knot, rather than to untie it, I will proceed to consider such as appear to be of any serious importance. They regard, as far as I can find, the miracles of Moses which the Egyptian magicians appeared to imitate—the passage of the Red Sea—the pillar of the cloud and fire that accompanied and directed the Israelites in their journeyings—and, the preservation of the raiment of the Jews during their abode in the wilderness, recorded Deut. viii. 4. On each of them I shall beg leave to offer a few remarks.

The circumstance of the magicians of Egypt having appeared to imitate some of the miracles performed by Moses—has by some writers been considered such as to discredit the entire history of the Mosaic miracles; Dr. Geddes, amongst others, observes, "We are now come "to the famous plagues of Egypt, the prelude to which, in my opinion, "warns us to beware of implicit credulity, and greatly weakens the "literal credibility of all that follows."* Let us consider how justly.

On this subject, after the best consideration I can give it, I cannot avoid adopting the opinion of the able and learned Mr. Hugh Farmer, in his Treatise on Miracles.† I do not believe that any real miracle, or such an exertion of power or foresight, more than human, and producing effects different from or contrary to the established course of nature, was ever performed, *but by the direct interposition of God*, or of such beings as act by his *immediate* power and commission. And I am also with him persuaded, that the magicians did not perform works really supernatural, nor were assisted by any superior invincible being; but were merely impostors attempting to imitate the real miracles of Moses by *secret sleights* or jugglings; which to a certain degree, and in a small extent, they succeeded in doing, so as to deceive the spectators, until at length, unable any longer to imitate the effects of divine power, and feeling in their own persons its chastisement, they were compelled to confess, "this is the finger of God;" and thus to give glory to God before Pharaoh and his servants, and to evince the futility of their own boasted magical arts, and the impotence of those base idols, and those invisible spirits or demons, on whose aid they relied, more clearly and convincingly than if they had never entered into the competition, or had not been permitted to succeed to such a degree, as proved that they had exercised freely and fully whatever arts or power they possessed, and had carried them to their greatest extent; but yet were baffled and overcome by the resistless power of Jehovah, their impos-

* Critical Remarks on Exod. vii. 5. p. 131.

† Vide Farmer's Dissertation on Miracles, ch. iv. sect. 1, p. 409.

ture detected, and their impious arrogance chastised. So that we can thus assign a probable account for the Deity's having selected such a kind of miracle, in the first instance, as might encourage the magicians to attempt its imitation, and for his permitting them to succeed in that, and even in a second or third attempt, because thus the Divine Power was ultimately more clearly manifested, and the imposture of magic, as well as the absurdity of idolatry more decidedly exposed.

Such appears to me to be the true account of this transaction; the distinct parts of which the able writer to whom I have referred has, as I conceive, fully established. I will exhibit his most important observations in as brief a form as is consistent with being intelligible, referring my more curious readers to the work itself, the perusal of which will, I think, amply recompense them, by the learning and judgment it displays, and the truths which it developes. I think it unnecessary to detail the various hypotheses employed by different commentators and divines to explain this part of Scripture history, as they have been fairly weighed, and, as I think, confuted by this able writer, whose opinion I adopt.*

"To this account," says Farmer,† "it may be objected, that Moses "describes the works of the magicians in the very same language as he "does his own, and therefore that there is reason to conclude that they "were equally miraculous. To which I answer, that if this were so, "yet nothing is more common than to speak of professed jugglers, ‡ as "*doing* what they *pretend* and *appear* to do, and that this language "never misleads, when we reflect what sort of men are spoken of, "namely, mere *imposers on the sight;* why might not Moses then use "the common popular language when speaking of the magicians, with-"out any danger of misconstruction, inasmuch as the subject he was "treating, all the circumstances of the narrative, and the opinion "which the historian was known to entertain of the inefficacy and "imposture of magic, did all concur to prevent mistakes?

"But, secondly, Moses *did not affirm* that there was a *perfect* con-"formity between his works and those of the magicians; he does not "close the respective relations of his own particular miracles, with "saying the magicians *did that thing*,‖ or, *according to what he did* so "*did they*,§ a form of speech used on this occasion no less than three "times in one chapter, to describe the exact correspondence between "the orders of God, and the behaviour of his servants; but makes "choice of a word of great latitude, such as does not necessarily ex-"press any thing more than a general similitude, such as is consistent "with a difference in many important respects, they did *so* or *in like* "*manner* as he had.—That a *perfect* imitation could not be designed

* Farmer, from page 409 to 449. † Ibid. page 449.

‡ "When Moses describes what the magicians pretended, and seemed to perform, by saying *they "cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents*, and they brought up frogs *upon the land of "Egypt;* he only uses the same language as Apuleius (Metam. I. 1.) where, describing a person who "merely played juggling tricks—Circulatorem aspexi equestrem spatham præacutam Mucrone infesto "devorasse ac mox eundem venatoriam lanceam—in ima viscera condidisse."

‖ "Vide in Exod. ix. 5, 6." § "Ib. vii. 6, 10, 20."

" by this word, is evident from its being applied to cases in which *such* " an imitation was absolutely impracticable; for, when Aaron had " converted *all* the waters of Egypt into *blood*, we are told the magi- " cians *did so*,* that is, something in like *sort*. Nor can it be sup- " posed that they *covered* the land of Egypt with frogs, this had been " done already; they could only appear to bring them over some small " space cleared for the purpose. But what is more decisive, the word " imports nothing more than their *attempting* some imitation of Moses, " for it is used when they FAILED IN THEIR ATTEMPT: *They did so* " *to bring forth lice, but they could not.*†

" Thirdly. But further, so far is Moses from ascribing the tricks " of the magicians to the invocation and power of demons, or to any " superior beings whatever, that he does most expressly refer all they " did or attempted in imitation of himself, to mere human artifice and " imposture. The original words, which are translated ‡ *enchantments*, " are entirely different from that rendered enchantments in other pas- " sages of Scripture, and do not carry in them any sort of reference to " sorcery or magic, or the interposition of any spiritual agents; they " import *deception* and *concealment*, and ought to have been rendered " *secret sleights* or *jugglings*, and are thus translated even by those " who adopt the common hypothesis with regard to the magicians. § " These secret sleights and jugglings are expressly referred to the " magicians, not to the devil, who is not so much as mentioned in the " history.—Should we therefore be asked, || How it came to pass, in " case the works of the magicians were performed by sleight of hand, " that Moses has given no hint thereof? we answer, He has not con- " tented himself with a hint of this kind, but, at the same time that " he ascribes his own miracles to Jehovah, he has in the most direct " terms resolved every thing done in imitation of them entirely to the " fraudulent contrivances of his opposers, to legerdemain or sleight of " hand, in contradiction from magical incantations. Moses, therefore,

* " Vide in Exod. vii. 20 and 22."

† " Exod. viii. 18. Le Clerc observes, Nec raro Hebræi ad conatum notandum verbisutuntur quæ " rem effectam significant Gen. xxxvii. 21. Consult him likewise on Exod. vii. 18. ch. 12, 48. p. 66, 2."

‡ " The original word used Exod. vii. 11, is בלהטיהם *belahatehem*; and that which occurs " ch. vii. 22. and ch. viii. 7, 18, is בלטיהם *belatehem*; the former is probably derived from " להט *lahat*, which signifies to burn, and the substantive a flame or shining sword-blade, and is " applied to the flaming sword which guarded the tree of life, Gen. iii. 24. Those who formerly used " legerdemain, dazzled and deceived the sight of spectators by the art of brandishing their swords, " and sometimes seemed to eat them and to thrust them into their bodies; and the expression seems " to intimate, that the magicians appearing to turn their rods into serpents, was owing to their " eluding the eyes of the spectators by a dextrous management of their swords. In the preceding " instances they made use of some different contrivance, for the latter word, *belatehem*, comes from " לוט or לאט to cover or hide (which some think the former word also does) and therefore fitly " expresses any secret artifices or methods of deception whereby false appearances are imposed upon " the spectator."

§ " Bishop Kidder on Exod. vii. 11."

|| " As we are by Dr, Macknight, in his Truth of the Gospel History, p. 372."

"could not design to represent their works as real miracles, at the "very time he was branding them as impostures.

"Fourthly. It remains only to show, that the works performed by "the magicians did not exceed the cause to which they are ascribed; "or in other words, the magicians proceeded no farther in imitation "of Moses, than human artifice might enable them to go (while the "miracles of Moses were not liable to the same impeachment, and "bore upon themselves the plainest signatures of that divine power "to which they are referred.) If this can be proved, the interposition "of the devil on this occasion will appear to be an hypothesis invented "without any kind of necessity, as it certainly is without any autho-"rity from the sacred text.

"First, With regard to the first attempt of the magicians, the "*turning rods into serpents:* It cannot be accounted extraordinary "that they should seem to succeed in it, when we consider that these "men were famous for the art of dazzling and deceiving the sight; "and that serpents being first rendered tractable and harmless, as they "easily may, have had a thousand different tricks played with them to "the astonishment of the spectators.* Huetius tells us,† that amongst "the Chinese there are jugglers who undertake to turn rods into ser-"pents; though no doubt they only dexterously substitute the latter "in the room of the former. Now this is the very trick the magicians "played: and as it appears by facts, that the thing in general is very "practicable, it is immaterial to account particulary how the thing "was done; since it is not always easy to explain in what manner a "common juggler imposes upon our sight. Should it be suggested, that "Moses might impose upon the sight of the spectators, as well as "the magicians; I answer, that as he ascribes their performances to "legerdemain, and his own to God, so there might and must have "been a wide difference in their manner of acting; the covered arts of "the magicians not being used by Moses, the same suspicion could "not rest on him that did on them.—What an ingenious writer asserts "is not true, that, according to the book of Exodus, the outward ap-"pearance on both sides was precisely the same. The book of Exodus "specifies a most important difference between the miracle of Aaron, "and the impostures of the magicians; for it says, that *Aaron cast "down his rod, before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it be-"came a serpent;* but with regard to the magicians, it uses very dif-"ferent language, for at the time it says, *They cast down every man "his rod, and they became serpents. It expressly declares* that they

* "Those who desire to see instances of this from modern authors, may consult Dr. Sykes on Mi-"racles, pp. 166, 168. Many pretended to render serpents harmless by charms, (pp. 58, 5, Bochart, "Hieroz. part post, 1, 3, c. 6; Shaw's Travels, pref. p. 5. also, p. 429. and Supplement, p. 62.) though "more probably they destroy the teeth, through which they ejected their poison. Herodotus men-"tions certain serpents which were quite harmless; Euterpe, c. 74. Antiquity attributes to the "Psylli, a people of Africa, the extraordinary virtue of rendering themselves invulnerable by ser-"pents, as well as of curing those who were bit by them. See Dr. Hasselquist's Voyages and Travels, "cited in the Monthly Review for February, 1766, page 133."

† "Alnetan Quæst. l. ii. p. 155."

" DID THIS BY THEIR ENCHANTMENTS OR COVERED ARTS; and " what in the most effectual manner prevented any apprehension, that " the serpent of Aaron was (like those of the magicians) the effect " only of a dexterous management, not a miraculous production, God " caused his rod to swallow up theirs, in which there was no room for " artifice, and which for this reason the magicians did not attempt to " imitate. This new miracle was not designed to establish the su- " periority of the God of Israel to the idols of Egypt; nor was it ca- " pable of answering that end: but in the view here given of it, had " much wisdom, by vindicating the credit of the former miracle* " (which might possibly be more open to suspicion, than any of the " rest) as well as by affording new evidence of a divine interposition " in favour of Moses. God considered this evidence as fully decisive " of the point in question, between his messengers and the magicians: " for from this time he proceeded to the punishment of Pharaoh and " the Egyptians: which affords a new demonstration, drawn from the " justice of the Divine Being, of the falsehood of the common hypo- " thesis, according to the representation given of it by those who " maintain that the magicians were not plainly vanquished till they " were restrained from turning the dust into lice. Had this been the " case it would have been right in Pharaoh to suspend his judgment " till that time; nor would God have punished him by the two inter- " vening plagues, that of turning the waters of the Nile (to which " Egypt owed its fecundity) into blood, and covering the land with " frogs: punishments so severe as to imply the most criminal obstinacy " on the part of Pharaoh.

" Second, With regard to the next attempt of the magicians to imi- " tate Moses, who had already turned all the running and standing " waters of Egypt into blood, there is no difficulty in accounting for " their success in the degree in which they succeeded. For it was " during the continuance of this judgment, when no water could be " procured, but by *digging round about the river*, that the magicians " attempted by some proper preparations to change the colour of the " small quantity that was brought them (probably endeavouring to " persuade Pharaoh, that they could as easily have turned a larger " quantity into blood.) In a case of this nature imposture might, and, " as we learn from history, often did take place. It is related by Va- " lerius Maximus,† that the wine poured into the cup of Xerxes was " three times changed into blood. But such trifling feats as these could " not at all disparage the miracle of Moses; the vast extent of which " raised it above the suspicion of fraud, and stamped upon every heart, " that was not steeled against all conviction, the strongest impression " of its divinity. For he turned their streams, rivers, ponds, and the

* "We learn from hence how little occasion there was for Moses to detect the artifices of the " magicians, who did not so much as pretend to any peculiar divine assistance, and who sunk into " contempt of themselves. 2 Tim. iii. 9. The nature of the works of Moses, and the open unsuspi- " cious manner of their performance, served sufficiently to disgrace the attempts of his rivals."

† " Lib. i. c. 6."

" water in all their receptacles, into blood. And the fish that was in " the river (Nile) died; and the river stank.*

" Third, Pharaoh not yielding to this evidence, God proceeded to " farther punishments, and covered the whole land of Egypt with " frogs.† Before these frogs were removed, the magicians undertook " to bring into some place cleared for the purpose a fresh supply; " which they might easily do, when there was such plenty every where " at hand. Here also the narrow compass of the work exposed it to " the suspicion of being effected by human art; to which the miracle " of Moses was not liable; the infinite number of frogs which filled " the whole kingdom of Egypt (so that their ovens, beds, and tables, " swarmed with them) being a proof of their immediate miraculous " production. Besides, the magicians were unable to procure their " removal which was accomplished by Moses, at the submissive appli- " cation of Pharaoh and at the very time that Pharaoh himself chose, " the more clearly to convince him that God was the author of these " miraculous judgments, and that their infliction or ‡ removal did not " depend upon the influence of the elements or stars, at set times or " in critical junctures.

" Fourth, The history of the last attempt of the magicians confirms " the account here given of all their former ones. Moses turned *all* " *the dust of the land into lice;* and this plague, like the two pre- " ceding ones, being inflicted at the word of Moses, and extended " over the whole kingdom of Egypt, must necessarily have been owing, " not to human art, but to a divine power. Nevertheless, the motives " upon which the magicians at first engaged in the contest with Moses, " the shame of desisting, and some slight appearances of success in " their former attempts, prompted them still to carry on the imposture; " and to try with their enchantments (or secret arts) to bring forth lice; " but they could not. With all their skill in magic, and with all their " dexterity in deceiving the spectators, they could not even succeed so " far as they had done in former instances, by producing a specious " counterfeit of this work of Moses. Had they hitherto performed " real miracles by the assistance of the devil, how came they to desist " now? It cannot be a greater miracle to produce lice, than to turn " rods into serpents, water into blood, and to create frogs. It has in- " deed been very often said, that the devil was now laid under a re- " straint: but hitherto no proof of this assertion has been produced. " The Scripture is silent, both as to the devil being now restrained " from interposing any farther in favour of magicians, and as to his " having afforded them his assistance on the former occasions. But if " we agree with Moses, in ascribing to the magicians nothing more " than the artifice and dexterity which belonged to their profession; " we shall find that their want of success in their last attempt, was

* " Exod. vii. 19—21.

† " Exod. viii. 6—8. Nor indeed can it be imagined that after this or the former plague had been " removed, that Pharaoh would order his magicians to renew either."

‡ " Ch. viii. 8. Had they been able to inflict this plague miraculously they might have removed it " in the same manner."

" owing to the different nature and circumstances of their enterprise. " In all the former instances, the *magicians knew beforehand what they* " *were to undertake*, and had *time for preparation*. They were not " sent for by Pharaoh, till after Moses had turned his rod into a ser- " pent: and previous notice had been publicly given of the two first " plagues. But the orders in relation to the third, *were no sooner* " *issued than executed*, without being previously imparted to Pharaoh. " So that in this last case they had no time for contriving any expe- " dient for imitating or impeaching the act of Moses. And had they " been allowed time, how was it possible for them to make it appear " that they produced those animals, by which they themselves and all " the country were already covered and surrounded? or what artifice " could escape detection, in relation to insects, whose minuteness " hinders them from being perceived till they are brought so near as to " be subject to the closest inspection?* Now therefore the magicians " chose to say, this (last work of Moses) is the finger of God.

" It has been generally thought that the magicians here acknowledge " that the God of Israel was stronger than the gods of Egypt, who " had hitherto assisted them, but were now restrained from doing it by " his superior power. But the text makes no mention of their allowing " the God of Israel to be superior to the gods of Egypt, much less of " their admitting the former to be Jehovah and the only true God. Nor " do they refer to any supernatural restraint upon the Egyptian deities, " but to the last miracle of Moses, when they say, This is the finger " of God; or, of a God; for the original word admits this sense, and " very probably was used in no other by the magicians, who believed " in a plurality of gods. But, unable to turn the dust of the earth " into lice (and even to seem to do it,) they allow that this surpassed " the science they professed, and argued the special miraculous inter- " position of some deity. There is no sort of evidence that this lan- " guage of the magicians proceeded from a desire of doing justice to " the character and claims of the God of Israel, or that it was not " merely designed as the best apology they were able to make for their " own failure of success, and to prevent Pharaoh from reproaching " them with the want of skill in their profession. Certain it is, that " this declaration of the magicians had no good effect upon Pharaoh, " but seems rather to be mentioned as an occasion of his continued " hardness. Nay, the history plainly intimates, that the magicians " themselves afterwards confronted Moses, till, in punishment of their " obstinacy, they were smitten with ulcers.† I add, that the sense " here assigned to their language, is perfectly agreeable to the account " before given of the state of the controversy between them and Moses: " for it implies, that the magicians had not so much as pretended to " any miraculous interposition of the gods in their favour, but relied

* " There being lice upon man and upon beast, seems to be assigned as a reason of the magicians " being unable to counterfeit this miracle."

† " *The magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boil; for the boil was upon the ma-* " *gicians.* Exod. ix. 11. Does not this imply, that till this time the magicians had in some method " or other opposed or disparaged Moses?"

" entirely upon the established rules of their art; and consequently " that Pharaoh's view in sending for them, was to enable himself to " determine, whether the works of Moses lay within the compass " of it.

" I cannot conclude this subject without observing, that the stre- " nuous but unsuccessful opposition to Moses added strength to his " cause; as it seemed to manifest the divinity of his miracles, by " clearing him from all suspicion of magic. This art was thought " equal to the most wonderful phenomena. In Egypt it was held in " the highest esteem, and carried to its utmost perfection. Pharaoh, " without doubt, on the present most important and interesting occa- " sion, engaged the assistance of the most able professors of it, who " from a regard to their own reputation and interest, would try every " possible method to invalidate the miracles of Moses. Nevertheless " their utmost efforts were baffled; and the vanity and futility of the " claims of magic were detected and exposed, agreeably to the censure " passed upon them by St. Paul; for, speaking of certain persons, " whose opposition to genuine Christianity was the sole effect of their " corrupt minds, without the least colour of reason, he compares them " to Jannes and Jambres,* who withstood Moses; and did it, he must " mean, with as little pretence, or there could be no justice in the " comparison. He adds, *their folly was manifest unto all men;*† " and thus he taxes the conduct of the magicians with the most glaring " absurdity. He cannot therefore be supposed to admit, that they " imitated and equalled for a time the miracles of Moses, and then " desisted as soon as they found themselves unable to continue the con- " test to advantage (which would have been a sort of prudence;) but " to assert, that they wickedly and absurdly attempted to place the " feats of art on a level with the undeniable operations of a divine " power; and so shamefully miscarrying in their undertaking, they ex- " posed themselves to the contempt of those who had once held them " in high veneration."

The miraculous nature of the PASSAGE OVER THE RED SEA has been questioned by sceptical writers, chiefly on two accounts, as far as I can discover; one, because Josephus compares it with the passage of Alexander over the bay of Pamphylia, in his Persian expedition, and as this is allowed not to have been miraculous, it is contended the passage over the Red Sea was as little so; and another, that it is conceived Moses may have taken advantage of a strong ebb tide, aided by a correspondent wind, which may have left a large strand dry, long enough for the Israelites to pass, but which on the Egyptians attempting to pursue them, returned and destroyed them. And they labour to collect instances of such ebbs and refluxes of the sea in different

* " Jannes and Jambres, mentioned by St. Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 8. from the Chaldee Paraphrase on " Exod. vii. 11. are supposed to have been the two chiefs of Pharaoh's magicians.—Numenius, the " Pythagorean philosopher, (apud Euseb. Prep. Ev. l. ix. c. 8.) says they were inferior to none in " magic skill, and for that reason chosen by common consent to oppose Museus, for so the Hebrews " called Moses. See Le Clerc on Exod. vii. 12, and Pliny's Hist. lib. xxx. c. 1."

† " 2 Tim. iii. 9."

parts of the world. I conceive both these objections rest on so slight a support, that a very little reflection will be sufficient to overturn them.

As to the representation of Josephus, it is clear he believed that the deliverance of the Jews at the Red Sea was aided by Divine power. "The Egyptians (says he) were not aware that they went into a road "made for the Hebrews, and not for others; that this road was made "for the deliverance of those in danger, but not for those that were "earnest to make use of it for the others destruction. As soon, there- "fore, as the whole Egyptian army was within it, the sea flowed to "its own place, and came with a torrent raised by storms of wind, and "encompassed the Egyptians: showers of rain also came down from "the sky, and dreadful thunders, and lightning with flashes of fire; "* thunderbolts were also darted upon them; nor was there any thing "which was to be sent by God upon man, as indications of his wrath, "which did not happen at this time, for a dark and dismal night op- "pressed them; and thus did all these men perish, so that there was "not one man left to be a messenger of this calamity to the rest of the "Egyptians."

Assuredly then Josephus believed this event miraculous: writing however for the Heathens, he adduces the instance of Alexander's passage at the edge of the sea on the bay of Pamphylia, which by some was represented as supernatural (doubtless on as good grounds as those on which the hero was worshipped as a god.) "As for myself, "(says he) I have delivered every part of the history as I found it in "the sacred books; nor let any one wonder at the strangeness of the "narration, if a way were discovered to those men of old time who "were free from the wickedness of modern ages, whether it happened "by the will of God, or whether it happened of its own accord, while "for the sake of those that accompanied Alexander king of Macedonia, "who yet lived comparatively but a little while ago, the Pamphylian "sea retired and afforded them a passage through itself when they had

* "That there was nothing miraculous in Alexander's pass, is evident from the account which the accurate geographer Strabo gives of it. Geog. xiv. p. 666. "Now about Phaselis is that narrow pas- "sage by the sea side through which Alexander led his army: there is a mountain called *Climax*, "which adjoins to the sea of Pamphylia, leaving a narrow passage on the shore, which in calm wea- "ther is bare so as to be passable by travellers, but when the sea overflows it is covered to a great "degree by the waves. Now then the ascent by the mountains being round about a steep, in still wea- "ther they make use of the road along the coast; but Alexander fell into the winter season, and "committing himself chiefly to fortune, he marched on before the waves retired; and so it happened "that they were a whole day in journeying over it, and were under water up to the navel."—Arrian also describes it in such a way as to prove it was not miraculous: "When Alexander (says he) re- "moved from Phaselis, he sent some part of his army over the mountains to Perga, which road the "Thracians shewed him; a difficult way it was, but short. However, he himself conducted those "that were with him by the sea shore; this road is impassable at any other time, than when the "north wind blows, but if the south wind prevail there is no passing by the shore. Now at this time "after strong south winds a north wind blew, and that not without a divine Providence, as both he "and they who were with him supposed, and afforded him a quick and easy passage." This supposed interposition of Providence, therefore, forms the entire of the miracle.—Calisthenes, indeed, who accompanied Alexander, represented the Pamphylian Sea, not only as opening for him a passage, but that, by raising and elevating its waters, it did pay him homage as its king; and surely it ought to have done no less, as he was not only a king, but a demigod. This Calisthenes was a true courtier.

" no other way to go, I mean when it was the will of God to destroy " the empire of the Persians; and this is confessed to be true by all " those who have written the history of Alexander. But as to these " events, let every one determine as he pleases."

It is quite clear from comparing this passage with that immediately preceding, that the former period speaks the real opinion of Josephus; the latter is merely a mode of expression calculated to keep up the attention and conciliate the belief of his Heathen readers, as if he had said, Do not immediately reject my history as fabulous and incredible, because it relates the miraculous passage of the Jews through the Red Sea; while you admit without hesitation an event stated by your own historians as of a similar nature, in the history of Alexander; in judging of these matters you can exercise your liberty. I have derived my history from our sacred books, to them I refer you to decide on its credibility.

Any supposition, of Josephus being a sceptic as to the truth of the Old Testament history, is clearly contradictory to the entire drift and tenour of all his works. The learned and judicious Reland, as quoted by Whiston in his first preliminary dissertation, justly observes, that " Josephus uses the same manner of speaking (Book iii. ch. 10;) after " he had said that it was falsely believed that Moses and the Israelites " were expelled Egypt for leprosy, he adds, *let every one consider this* " *as he pleases;* did he therefore intend to say that this was also *un-* " *certain*, it being no other than that impudent calumny which he him- " self vehemently confutes and exposes at large in his first Book against " Apion, page 25 to 31." And Reland adds many other instances of his using this expression, where it is quite certain that he most firmly believed the fact to which he applies it.

Thus utterly ill founded is the objection to the miracle, from the supposition of its having been confessed incredible by Josephus. But after all, this objection is in its very nature futile and inconclusive; for, how can the truth of the Mosaic history, or the miraculous nature of any event which it records, be either materially confirmed or weakened by a writer who lived near two thousand years after the event, and who confessedly derived all his knowledge concerning it, from the very same sacred volume which still remains for our examination? Most certainly the reality and the miraculous nature of the fact must be decided by the credibility of the original narrative, and of the concurring testimonies which either oppose or confirm it, if any such can be found. To these, therefore, let us direct our attention.

On this subject, it is in the first place an obvious remark, that the Sacred History itself represents this transaction as a clear and stupendous miracle, and declares that it was recognized as such in the hymn of thanksgiving composed at the very time by Moses, and from that period constantly preserved by the whole Jewish nation, and that every allusion to it in the subsequent parts of the Jewish history, the psalms or the prophets, presupposes and affirms its miraculous nature.

" Fear ye not," (says Moses to the multitude, panic-struck at the

sight of the Egyptian army) "stand still, and see the salvation of the "Lord, which he will shew you to-day; for the Egyptians whom ye have "seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord "shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." What language can declare more expressly the certain expectation of a miraculous interposition?

This interposition was manifested in three things: the first, in protecting them from the attack of the Egyptians before their passage through the sea; the second, in opening that passage; and the third, in destroying the Egyptians. As to the first, the sacred historian gives this account: "And the angel of God which went before the camp of "Israel, removed, and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud "went from before their face, and stood behind them. And it came "between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of the Israelites; "and it was a cloud of darkness to them, but it gave light by night to "these; so that the one came not near the other all the night." * Now it is scarcely credible any historian should invent such a circumstance as this, so unlikely to occur even to the most fertile imagination. It is still more incredible he should hope to persuade a whole nation of the truth of such a fiction, and utterly impossible that such a fact, if real, should not be miraculous.

The historian proceeds: "And Moses stretched out his hand over "the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east "wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were "divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea "upon the dry ground: and the *waters were a wall unto them on their* "*right* hand, and on *their left*."† Now this description is utterly inapplicable to any thing like an *ebb of the sea*. This would carry away the whole body of the waters, and leave a dry space, but it could never *divide* them; it could never make them stand *like a wall upon their right hand and on their left*. Or, even admitting Dr. Geddes's remark, "that we need not suppose them to stand upright "like real walls, but only that they were deep enough on each side of "the shoal to prevent the Israelites from being flanked or attacked "from any quarter but from behind;" it is not conceivable how an ebb of the sea alone could produce this effect. The history plainly ascribes it to a divine interposition; and we must either pronounce that totally false, or the event it relates decidedly miraculous.

The third part of this transaction is the destruction of the Egyptians; this is also described in terms which imply a decided miracle. "The Egyptians," says the history, "pursued, and went in after them, "to the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his "horsemen." He adds, "And it came to pass, that in the morning "watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the "pillar of fire, and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot-wheels," (or as Dr. Geddes translates it, so *entangled them*) "that they drave them heavily: so that the

* Exod. xiv. 19, 20. † Ibid. xiv. 21, 22.

"Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord "fighteth for them, against the Egyptians." *

Here is another circumstance perfectly consistent with, and as it were, regularly connected with, the former part of the narrative, concerning the miraculous cloud which divided the two armies; but yet so unlike any thing mere human imagination would have conceived, that it is scarcely credible any thing but reality could have suggested it. The narrative proceeds: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out "thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the "Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And "Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea; and the sea returned to "his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled "against it: and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the "sea. There remained not so much as one of them. Thus the Lord "saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians: and Israel "saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that "great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people "feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." †

Nothing can be more clear than that Moses ascribes the sudden return of the waters, at such a critical moment as to destroy the whole host of the Egyptians, to a supernatural power; and states it to have been recorded and believed as such by the whole nation of the Jews, from the moment the event took place; and preserved in their perpetual recollection by that sublime hymn of triumphal thanksgiving, which he himself composed, and has transmitted to posterity in the next chapter. And it has been well remarked, that it is totally inconceivable that such a history could have gained credit with the Jewish nation, as we certainly know it did, had the facts on which it is founded been the consequences of natural causes, or of mere human contrivance; "Who can imagine," say the authors of the Universal History, "that in such a case any credit could have been given to his relation, "when he declares that God, who alone knew what passed in Egypt, "did unexpectedly make them take this new route; when he describes "his own surprise and the people's consternation at the sight of the "Egyptian army; above all, when he describes the sea miraculously "dividing to let them pass, and suddenly returning to overthrow their "enemies? What opinion must they have had of his sincerity, if these "events, thus ascribed to God, were entirely owing to his own cun"ning and policy? On the other hand, what must they think of his "conduct, that could be guilty of such an oversight as to lead them "into such a danger, though under the pretence of miraculous direc"tion? And finally, Moses must have been the most impudent and "the most vain man alive, to attempt making such a vast and not "over-credulous multitude believe that their passage was altogether as "miraculous as he affirms it to have been, when they could not but "have been well assured of the contrary, much less appoint a solemn "festival of seven days, and enjoin it to be observed by them and their

* Exod. xiv. 23—25. † Ibid. verse 26, &c.

"posterity to all future ages in memory of their pretended miraculous "passing through the sea, when the experience of a much shorter time "than they continued along that coast, could easily have convinced "them that there was nothing in it but what was natural, and what "happened every day." *

Thus unaccountable are the existence and the reception of the Mosaic history of this event, if this deliverance be ascribed to mere natural causes, directed by human contrivance, and misrepresented by artful exaggeration. †

But let us for a moment set aside all the particular circumstances of the history, retaining only the two great facts, even that the Israelites escaped from the Egyptians by passing in some mode or other through or along an arm of the sea, in which their pursuers were destroyed, and try the probability of the explanation given of these facts by those who set aside all miraculous interference.

Moses, say they, took advantage of an ebb of the sea, which, aided by a favourable wind (not as the original states, an East wind, for this, though it corresponds to the history, as it blows across the Gulf of Suez, and therefore if supernaturally increased might divide it across, yet could not answer this hypothesis) left a dry strand to a great ex-

* Universal History of the Jews, Book I. chap. vii. note P.

† As I wish to take the objectors to this miracle *on their own statement*, I have not judged it necessary to enter into a critical discussion of the spot where this passage took place; particularly as absolute certainty on such a point may not be easily attainable, at the distance of three thousand three hundred years.

I refer on this subject to the learned Mr. Bryant on the Plagues of Egypt, (p. 388) who, in a dissertation on the place of the departure of the Jews from Egypt, and their subsequent journey and passage over the Red Sea, brings many strong arguments and authorities to shew that the passage took place at *Bedea*, about six German miles, or about twenty-four English, from Suez, "where and where "only there is a defile, which consisted of a long extended coast, and was bounded by the *Sinus Heroopolitanus* to the East, by the extremity of the Arabian Mountain to the West; at the end was the "inundation or inlet of the sea called *Clysmæ*, and now by the Arabians *Colsum*: here were they "situated, exactly as the text describes they were, *by the sea*, and *entangled* by the land; the wilderness had shut them in." "But," says Dr. Geddes, "the sea is here near four leagues broad by "fifty feet deep; to have dried up a passage through such a mass of waters would have been a prodigy "indeed; for my part, who believe there was nothing miraculous in the event, I am positively for the "pass at Suez, where at this day there are shallows fordable at low water, and which might in former "times have been frequently dry: we all know what changes happen in the bed of seas, as well as in "the bed of rivers, especially where that bed is sand, which the Gulf of Suez certainly is." There certainly have been such changes, but, unfortunately for the Doctor's system, in this instance the changes have been such as to prove that the spot where the Doctor supposes the Jews to have passed, instead of being formerly *more dry* than at present, was entirely overflowed by the Red Sea, which at that time flowed into the country, probably thirty miles higher than it does at present, and overflowed a considerable basin or lake which has been since separated from the Red Sea by a bank of sand gradually accumulating near Suez, and has been dried up, partly by sand and partly by exhalation. While this lake existed, and the communication between it and the Red Sea was open, it would have been more impracticable than now to effect a passage where Dr. Geddes and the other authors, who are only for a *half miracle*, or for *no miracle*, placed it. In proof of this former extent of the Red Sea, consult Memoires sur L'Egypte, publies pendant Les Campagnes Du General Bonaparte, par L'Institut. d'Egypte, Tom. iv. p. 218. The gentlemen of this Institute (as might be expected) will have the passage not to be miraculous, for, like Dr. Geddes, they think that the Red Sea at Suez has a strand that is passable at low water, while at the same time it is deep enough, *particularly when agitated by tempests*, to destroy a considerable army. *Quære*—If the Red Sea communicated with the Lake, as these writers have proved it did, *was this strand so large?* But these gentlemen have not pretended to account for the wonderful difference between the fortune of the Jews and of the Egyptians. It was a *mere accident* from tempests, &c. &c. &c.

tent, and dry long enough for the Jews to pass, (perhaps by ebb succeeding to ebb) while the Egyptians, attempting to follow them, a sudden and violent reflux of the sea destroyed them.

"But," says Dr. Geddes,* "as for the ebb upon ebb, it is now never observed to happen at Suez, where the tides are very regular, "and the difference between high and low water only about three feet "and a half." Those who have examined the tides here most accurately, assure us, "that the greatest distance that it falls from the place "of high water is about three hundred yards, and these can continue "entirely uncovered but during the space of half an hour at most, for "during the first six hours the sea doth only retire by degrees, and in "less than half an hour it begins again to flow towards the shore; the "most therefore that can be allowed, both of time and space, of passable ground, in a moderate computation, is about two hundred paces "during six hours, or one hundred and fifty paces during eight hours. "Now it is plain that a multitude, consisting at least of upwards of "two millions and a half of men, women, children, and slaves, encumbered besides with great quantity of cattle and household stuff, "could never perform such a march within so short, we may say within "even double that space, though we should allow them also double "the breadth of ground to do it on. This argument will hold good "against those who suppose that they only coasted along some part of "the sea, and those who maintain that they crossed that small arm or "part of it which is towards the further end near the port of Suez, as "six or eight hours could not have been sufficient for the passage of so "immense a multitude, allow them what breadth of room you will; "much less for Pharaoh to have entered it with his whole host."†

In addition to this, how extremely improbable is it, that none of the Egyptians should know any thing of the ebbing and flowing of the sea, so as to foresee the danger they were exposed to; and how incredible, that they should all obstinately persist in pursuing the Israelites through it, when they saw it gradually returning upon them until they were all swallowed up by it.

But Dr. Geddes has examples enough to render all this credible. "At the Washes between Norfolk and Lincolnshire, or the great estuary between Lancaster and Hooksborough, but for guides hired by "government, passengers would often be swallowed up by the returning tide." ‡ How unfortunate that the Egyptian government never thought of *hiring guides!* True it is, these tides are in the Bristol Channel, which, according to Newton, § are of an extraordinary height,

* Note upon Exod. xiv. 21.

† Universal History of the Jews, chap. vii. note P.

‡ Critical Remarks on Exodus, xiv. 28.

§ Vide Newtoni Principia, lib. iii. prop. 37, where he notices the great tides at Bristol, the "magnitudinem æstus" in that port, and accounts for its being impossible that there can be full tides in the Red Sea, "etenim ut plenus sit æstus latitudo maris ab oriente in occidentem non minor esse debet "quam graduum nonaginta." Now the Red Sea is extremely narrow from East to West; but Newton may not seem to Dr. Geddes good philosophic authority; he certainly was so credulous as to believe in miracles and prophecies, witness his Commentary upon Daniel.

from the nature of the channel, rising sometimes to *forty-five* feet, whereas in the Gulf of Suez they rise only *three and a half.*

But then the Egyptians were "on a shoal between two masses of "water, a deep stagnation on the left hand, and the sea on the right, "both agitated with a vehement wind, which blew almost directly in "their faces." This deep stagnation of water on the left hand is a new circumstance; the Egyptians, we must suppose, had never suspected the existence of this, or they would have known their danger better. But they may have laboured under other very *unfortunate accidents*, according to Dr. Geddes, "for if, while they were on such "a shoal, thunder and lightning attended the tempest, it would be ter-"rible indeed. Besides, extraordinary tides have been always attended "with danger and death. An instance occurred at Maranopolis, when "the Emperor Valens was there; and lately at the river Plata in South "America; and those great commotions are not unfrequently attended "with *earthquakes;*" (and what is most of all to the point, because it "happened in Egypt and Palestine) "in the year 1034, on a dreadful "earthquake, which obliged the inhabitants to live in the open air "eight days, the sea receded three parasangs, and on its return de-"stroyed the people who had gone out to pick up cockles and shells." Here is then *precisely a parallel case.* Thus we see how the entire matter happened without any the least miracle; only an *unprecedented succession of fortunate accidents*, which occurred here to the Jews, and by which, with *tide* and *wind* in their *favour*, a *calm* sky and *firm footing*, they *escaped* along this shore, while the *unhappy Egyptians instantly after* were intercepted by a stagnation of water on one side, and a tide on the other, both unexpected; a storm with thunder *and* lightning in their faces, and an *earthquake perhaps* to close all, *and* produce a resistless reflux of the sea, which overwhelmed them; all these very unfortunate mischances *meeting* together at this critical moment, but at the same time *perfectly natural.* So much for the *passage of the Red Sea without a miracle;* but the reader will, I believe, allow, not without something *extraordinary.*

Another miracle much questioned, is that recorded Exod. xiii. 21. 22. "And the Lord went before them, by day in a PILLAR OF A "CLOUD, to lead them in the way; and by night in a PILLAR OF "FIRE, to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not "away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, "from before the people."

Toland, and Dr. Geddes after him, are confident this was only such a beacon as is commonly used by caravans, or armies, to direct their march over trackless and sandy deserts: "*a wet bundle of straw* per-"haps smoking by day, and blazing by night, or a sacred fire carried "about in a portable altar; but the Hebrew historian makes a miracu-"lous cloud of it."* Most certainly he represents it as miraculous, for he states that this pillar of smoke and fire stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites, † and prevented the former, though eager in

* Dr. Geddes's Critical Remarks on Exodus, xiii. 21.

† Exod. xiv. 20.

their pursuit, from coming near the latter for a whole night; and that the terror of the Egyptians was augmented by the terrific appearance which this pillar of fire assumed. Again, when the tabernacle was finished and erected, the historian relates that "a cloud covered the "tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord fell upon the "tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of the congre-"gation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord "filled the tabernacle." * This insufferable and extended glory could not well arise from a *bundle of wet* or of *blazing straw*, or even a sacred fire on a *portable* altar; and let it be remembered, it was not *occasional*, but *permanent:* "The cloud of the Lord was on it by "day, and the fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of "Israel, in all their journeyings." † Surely it would have required a supernatural power of blindfolding and deceiving all the house of Israel, for forty years, to make them believe that a common fire was thus supernatural. It is adduced by Moses as one manifest proof of the Divine presence, which the surrounding nations must hear of—and appealed to in his address to the people, ‡ as an undeniable instance of the constant guardian care of God. Reproaching them with their refusal to obey the Divine command, and invade the land of Canaan on their first approach to it, he says, "In this ye did not believe the Lord "your God, who went in the way before you to search you out a place "to pitch your tents, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye "should go, and in a cloud by day." From this glory issued the Divine voice which condemned the sedition of Miriam and Aaron, § and which denounced the plague inflicted to punish those who supported the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram. ‖

But it is said, that Moses has betrayed the secret of this not being a signal of the Divine guidance, by his anxiety that his brother-in-law Hobab should accompany them in their journeys through the wilderness. "If," says Dr. Geddes, "the cloud continually directed and guided "their marches, what need was there for Hobab to be instead of eyes "to them? To me it appears from this very passage that Moses was "conscious Hobab knew the wilderness, and the places in it proper for "encampments, better than himself, or his cloud either." ¶ Rosenmuller he quotes as observing on this passage, "that though the "Israelites might be directed by the guidance of the miraculous cloud††

* Exod. xl. 34, 35. † Ibid. verse 38. ‡ Numb. xiv. 14.

§ Numb. xii. 5 and 10, which notice the circumstance of this cloud of fire visibly descending from on high, and resting on the Tabernacle, and afterwards re-ascending from it.

‖ Numb. xvi. 42. ¶ Vide Critical Remarks on Numbers, x. 29.

†† It will not perhaps be thought too minute an observation, that Moses tells Hobab he would be useful to them, not in directing them where to encamp, or how long to remain in any station, (for this the guidance of the miraculous cloud pointed out) *but how to encamp in the wilderness*, i. e. as appears to me, *how to arrange their encampment* in each appointed place, so as to embrace the circumstances of water, pasture, shelter, supply of fuel, medicinal or nutritive plants or substances, &c, &c. in or near that station, to the greatest advantage. See in Genesis, xxvi. how the Philistines stopped up the wells which had been dug by Abraham, and how Isaac searched for and dug them again, and it will convince us how useful such local knowledge in Hobab may have been to the Jews, Mr. Harmer assigns these as probable advantages the Jews might derive from Hobab.—*Observations on Scripture*, Vol. I. p. 492.

"where to encamp, and how long to remain there, yet many things "respecting the accommodation of the people might be left to *human* "*prudence*, in which Hobab might be very useful." Thus *prudent* "and *cautious* is Rosenmuller," says the *Doctor*, *deriding* such an unphilosophic sentiment.

I presume that the Doctor believed that every well in the vicinity of the camp, and every spot of pasture in the neighbouring hills, and every plant useful for food or medicine, must have been pointed out by miracle, if there was any supernatural interference; those who believe otherwise, may think Rosenmuller's observations not quite ridiculous, "and that Hobab might be of use to him instead of eyes," in discovering objects thus minute but not unimportant; and yet the miraculous guidance of the cloud still be admitted.

I would in addition beg leave to observe, that it is not easy to account for the Jews *remaining forty years marching* and countermarching in this wilderness, without either attempting to invade Canaan, or to return to Egypt, but by the *continued control of that miraculous power*, the constant presence of which this *supernatural appearance visibly attested*. In a word, the effects of this divine guidance are so interwoven with the whole history of the journeyings of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan, that we must either reject the entire, as a mere unfounded fable in all its parts, or admit the reality of this miracle.

Another miracle excepted against is that recorded Deut. viii. 4. and xxix. 5. containing the supernatural preservation of the raiment of the Israelites during their forty years wandering in the wilderness. From the mode in which this miracle is mentioned, I deduced an argument to confirm the genuineness and truth of the narrative,* which (if just) proves at the same time the reality of the miracle. Till this reasoning is refuted, I might perhaps be justified in passing unnoticed the objections to this miracle, which certainly affect not at all that argument; but it may be more satisfactory to consider them.

And, first, what is the statement of the history, Deut. viii. 4.—Our translation renders, "Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, nei-"ther did thy foot swell these forty years." Dr. Geddes, with his peculiar elegance, † translates it, "Ye have not these forty years worn "*tattered clothes*, nor have your feet *been blistered* by wearing torn "shoes."—Deut. xxix. 5 and 6, in our translation, "I have led you "forty years in the wilderness; your clothes are not waxen old upon

* Vide supra.

† Take another specimen of this elegance in Exod. xii. 11 and 13. It is said of the lamb appointed to be eaten at that most solemn rite there instituted, "Ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's pass-"over;" and again, "when I see the blood, I will *pass over you*." For this, Dr. Geddes chooses to read, "It is the Lord's *skip-offering*, and I will *skip over you*." In his Critical Remarks, he says, "It has been observed that the word *skip offering* has a *ludicrous* air; and so now it appears to my-"self; but what could I do? I wished to express the purport of the original, to leap suddenly," &c. &c. and he concludes a long note—"But to *skip from the subject* all at once, and to put a short "end to the controversy, let *Phasar* be restored in my version throughout, my first volume, as it has "been done throughout my second, and let the reader affix to it what meaning he pleases." Our learned translator was determined to be either *ludicrous* or *unintelligible*, to make the sacred text appear either *burlesque* or *nonsense*. *For shame*, Dr. Geddes!

"you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. You have not "eaten bread, neither have you drunk wine or strong drink, that you "might know that I am the Lord your God." Dr. Geddes, "Forty "years I have conducted you in a wilderness, yet on your backs you "have never worn *tattered clothes*, nor torn shoes* on your feet; "bread ye have not eaten, wine or strong drink ye have not drunken; "that ye might know that I am the Lord your God." On the former passage, Dr. Geddes remarks, that "all the versions, down to the Gr. "Ver. exclusively, translate it as our version; by which one would be "led to imagine what *credulous Jews and credulous Christians believe*, "that during these forty years the clothes of the Israelites wore not "out. This comes of *too literal* translations. The obvious meaning "is, that they were never under the necessity of *wearing tattered* rai-"ment." And he adds a note from Rosenmuller, stating, that "the "flocks and herds of the Jews must have supplied them with wool, "goats' hair, and leather, and that there were persons skilled in weav-"ing and spinning, as appears from Exod. xxxv. 25, 26."† I admit the truth of this observation, as far as it extends: but let it be remembered, that in these hot countries, the most necessary and the least lasting part of the dress of every class was linen;‡ now it will not surely be asserted that the Jews could in the wilderness *till* and *raise flax*, any more than *corn*. As therefore God supplied them with manna, a substitute for bread, so he appears to have preserved their linen raiment from wearing by a supernatural operation, that they might not feel the want of *flax*. And Moses might recal the attention of the Jews to this miracle at the moment it was going to cease, in the manner I have stated above, saying, "Thy raiment is not waxed old upon thee," not *marking distinctly what kind of raiment*, which the people must immediately recognize, the moment their attention was directed to it.

On the second passage, Dr. Geddes, on the words, "Bread ye have "not eaten," &c. remarks, "These must not be too strictly or literally "understood; they were not altogether destitute of bread, or of wine, "both which were used in their sacrifices, but that bread and wine "must have been purchased of strangers, as they had no corn-fields or "vineyards of their own during their nomadick life in the wilderness." If the Doctor, in this remark, had inserted one additional word, *fields of flax*, which the Jews certainly had not in the wilderness, he would have seen, that though they might, from the materials brought out of Egypt, or by purchase from strangers, procure linen enough to supply what was necessary for the tabernacle, and though they might be able to provide clothes of other kinds for themselves, yet this necessary species of raiment must, to the great bulk of the nation, have been

* On the importance of this circumstance, vide Harmer, Vol. II. p. 379; and Vol. IV. p. 351 to 354, on the *ruggedness* of the way and the dangers of the journey in the wilderness.

† Critical Remarks on Deut. viii. 4.

‡ Vide Harmer's Observations, Vol. II. p. 417, and Vol. III. p. 324 to 326. Fleury's Manners of the Israelites, ch. vi.

supplied by miracle, or not supplied at all. I therefore do not see as *much mischief* as the Doctor in *literal translations*, and do not think myself *credulous* in believing this miracle real, rather than believing that the whole Jewish nation were so imposed on as to believe it contrary to the direct personal experience of every individual amongst them for forty years.

To conclude this long argument, that my readers may be able to decide on whom the charge of *credulity* lies; and whether the Doctor and his followers observe all the rules of probability, and apply them with philosophic sagacity, in connecting causes and effects, when they reject and ridicule the Mosaic miracles.

I shall briefly *review* the *causes* the *Doctor assigns* for such of the events vulgarly deemed miraculous, as he admits to have taken place, while he denies any miraculous interference.

And as to the *plagues of Egypt, excluding all miraculous* interference, my readers may perhaps be at a loss to conjecture what adequate cause can be assigned for any thing approaching to a series of events so calamitous, so extraordinary, and succeeding each other in such rapid succession. But the Doctor has found an adequate cause—it was nothing more or less than TOO GREAT AN OVERFLOW OF TURBID OR MUDDY WATERS; THIS WAS THE CAUSE OF THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

Hear the Doctor's own words:* "Such were the famous plagues of "Egypt, as they are related by the Hebrew historian, which narration, "with all the concomitant circumstances, if any unfettered mind can "really and truly believe, I will only say that it is far, very far removed from scepticism.

"Is the story, then, without foundation? Perhaps not. While "Moses and Aaron were soliciting the Egyptian King for leave to go "with the Israelites into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God, but in "reality to escape altogether from their tyrannical masters, it *might* "*very well happen* that an *extraordinary inundation of the Nile* should "take place, and be followed with an uncommon brood of frogs, gnats, "and other most troublesome animals, a tremendous hail, a prodigious "flight of locusts, an unusual darkness, and finally a ravaging pestilence. And all these calamities might, in the course of nine months "or so, have succeeded one another, *and been in a great measure the* "*consequence of the first calamity*, TOO GREAT AN OVERFLOW OF "TURBID WATER. But that these happened exactly according to the "Scripture relation, it requires great faith, or rather credulity, to believe."

How conformable is this conclusion to reason and experience! It is surely particularly natural, and happens every day, that too great an overflow of turbid waters should be attended with these consequences, particularly with "a tremendous HAIL, a prodigious flight of LOCUSTS, "and an unusual DARKNESS!"

So much for the Doctor's system as to the plagues of Egypt. Next

* Vide Critical Remarks on Exodus, xii. 22.

let us review his system as to the supposed *miraculous division of the Red Sea*, the escape of the Israelites, and the destruction of the Egyptians.

On this occasion, the cunning Israelites, or at least their leader, who doubtless foresaw every thing, though *no prophet*, decoyed their enemies into this snare, and, after having taken advantage of an uncommon tide * of ebb, (where no such ebb is now ever observed) protracted by a favourable wind, "passed safe; the Egyptians pursued "immediately, but they went along a shoal. A deep stagnation of "water on one side, a violent return of the sea on the other, both "totally unexpected, a tempest may have blown in their faces, with "thunder and lightning, which made it terrible—a tide as *high* per-"haps as in the Bristol Channel, or in the river Plata, though in a "place where at other times the water does not rise above three feet "and an half. But this tide *may have* been the effect of an *earth-*"*quake.*" All these *accidents* combining instantly after the Israelites had passed safe, may have destroyed the Egyptians; but there was certainly *no miracle*, all quite natural and accidental, though as to the Egyptians *very unlucky;* the artful leader of the Jews, who had, it should appear, *foreseen* and taken advantage of all these *accidents*, persuaded his credulous nation that all was miraculous.

The CLOUD by day, and PILLAR OF FIRE by night, which accompanied and guided the Israelites for forty years, and which they have always believed supernatural, and of which such supernatural effects are so minutely recorded, was nothing more than "bundles of straw, "or some equally common combustible, carried on high poles or a "portable altar, smoking by day and blazing by night."

The MANNA, which is represented as forming the regular staple food of two millions of people, in a wilderness in many parts wholly barren, and this for forty years, is only "*a collection of grains* shaken from a "particular *shrub*, in the morning before the *sun rises*," † which the deluded Israelites were persuaded to believe came from the skies, and to which they ascribed a property, "which has not been remarked to "belong to the common manna, namely, that it bred worms and stank, "if kept until the next morning;" ‡ a mistake they did not seem to correct during the forty years. And again, they thought "that which "was gathered on the sixth day would keep unto the eighth." Another mistake: *credulous* interpreters consider *both* these as parts of the miracle,

The SOLEMN GIVING OF THE LAW FROM SINAI, which the Hebrew historian represents in such terrific colours, "with thunders and "lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the "trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people in the camp trembled; "and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord de-"scended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke "of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly;" and of which

* Vide Critical Remarks on Exod. xiv. compared with a note to the translation of Exod. xiv. 21.

† Critical Remarks on Exodus, xvi. 14. ‡ Ibid. xvi. 19, 20.

the lawgiver tells the people, "The Lord spake unto you out of the "midst of the fire. Ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no "similitude, only *ye heard the voice.*" All this was mere artful management on the part of the sapient lawgiver of the Jews." * "Nothing," says Dr. Geddes, "could be better contrived or more dexterously executed, than the plan which he adopts to give a sanction "to the precepts he was about to promulge. The highest top of Sinai, "where he was supposed to have received his first mission, is pitched "upon as the secret sanctuary where he is to meet the Deity, and "receive from him a new code of laws, to be ever after observed by "the Hebrew nation, as coming from their own peculiar God: the "people, first purified by ablutions and abstinence from connubial "pleasures, are forbidden on pain of death to approach the mountain; "and the priests themselves, who might approach it to offer sacrifice "are inhibited from ascending to the summit; order is added to order, "and caution to precaution, to prevent the smallest infringement of "this injunction." Now comes another instance of the *uncommon foresight* or uncommon *good luck* of Moses: "while the people wait "thus in awe and anxious expectation, A STORM OF THUNDER AND "LIGHTNING ENSUES; this they are told is the voice of God, who "meanwhile is supposed to give to Moses, in words articulate, the "Decalogue, or ten commandments. Such I conceive to be the whole "mystery," † says the philosophic Doctor. I would humbly suggest to the publisher of the next edition, to subjoin to the words, "*a storm "of thunder and lightning ensued,*" AND PROBABLY A VOLCANIC ERUPTION, WITH AN EARTHQUAKE; this will be NO miracle, will answer the phenomena better; *and why should not this*, as well as *the* storm of thunder and lightning, *happen exactly* when Moses wants it to terrify the Jews?

As to the last instance, concerning the *raiment of the Israelites* being *supernaturally preserved* for forty years. Here there was neither miracle nor mystery; the raiment of the Jews was worn, and replaced by their own care and industry, out of the same materials as at all other times. We are *only to suppose* that the historian positively asserted they had been preserved miraculously, and that the people believed him, because he asserted it.

Such is Dr. Geddes's philosophical and probable explanation of the Mosaic miracles, of which I will only say—

"Non credat Judæus apella—
Non ego."

To CONCLUDE the preceding view of the system of Infidels, who, compelled to admit the common facts of the Jewish history, would yet set aside all miraculous interposition in the establishment of the Jewish religion: we see it exhibits and requires a series of effects without causes; unparalleled prodigies, produced without the aid of any supernatural power; unprecedented events, foreseen without the aid of any Divine foresight, and concurring to assist the plans of the Legislator,

* Critical Remarks on Exodus, xix. † Ibid. particularly verse 16, 18.

as if he could at will command all the powers of nature, and control all the faculties of man, while at the same time he is supposed to be nothing more than a rash and bold impostor.

It exhibits a whole nation deluded for a series of forty years, as to facts obvious to sense, and subject to the test of daily experience. It represents this nation as subsisting in a wilderness without any extraordinary means of support, and remaining there under unspeakable hardships, without any assignable motive; acknowledging the authority of their lawgiver, on assertions of facts which they must have known to be false, and submitting to a code of laws most strict and irksome,* and to regulations as to property most strange and unprecedented, on sanctions which there was plainly no power to realize.

Yet all this system of imposture and delusion became the means of preserving the worship of the true God in this nation, when it was banished from all the world besides; it prepared the way for the introduction of the Gospel, and thus communicating the most extensive blessings to mankind; and the nation acknowledging this law, still subsists at the close of 3,300 years, in a state nearly as strange and unprecedented as when in the wilderness of Arabia; attesting the truth of prophecy, and prepared in a most peculiar manner to assist in its further accomplishment, and complete that grand scheme of Providence, which is constantly, though gradually, advancing the improvement of the human race. A scheme which, however, we are by infidels called on to believe was introduced originally by human fraud and delusion, and is still carried on by mere worldly policy, hypocrisy, and priest-craft, on the one side; ignorance, error, and delusion, on the other. Such is the *philosophy of infidelity*, and such the *credulity* of those who spurn at the faith of a Christian as unfounded and irrational.

* *e. g.* As to the Sabbatic year, the year of jubilee, vide supra.

THE END.

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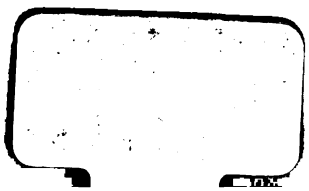
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